

Boundless World History – HST 101

Table of Contents

1: The Study of History and the Rise of Civilization.....	5
1.1: The Study of History	5
1.1.1: Splitting History	5
1.1.2: Dates and Calendars.....	10
1.1.3: The Imperfect Historical Record.....	16
1.1.4: Historical Bias	21
1.2: Precursors to Civilization	29
1.2.1: The Evolution of Humans	29
1.2.2: The Neolithic Revolution	32
2: Ancient Mesopotamian Civilizations	39
2.1: The First Urban Civilizations	39
2.1.1: The Sumerians	39
2.1.2: The Assyrians	42
2.2: Akkadian Empire	47
2.2.1: River Valley Civilizations	47
2.2.2: The Akkadian Empire	50
2.2.3: Ur	54
2.3: Babylonia.....	59
2.3.1: Babylon	59
2.3.2: Hammurabi's Code	62
2.3.3: Babylonian Culture	65
2.3.4: Nebuchadnezzar and the Fall of Babylon.....	69
3: Early Civilizations	74
3.1: Ancient Societies on the Mediterranean	74
3.1.1: The Hittites	74
3.1.2: The Phoenicians	77
3.1.3: The Minoans	81
3.2: Ancient Africa	86
3.2.1: Sao	86
3.2.2: Ancient Carthage	88

3.3: The Ancient Andes	93
3.3.1: The Caral Civilization	93
3.3.2: The Chavín Civilization	95
3.3.3: The Valdivia Culture	99
4: Ancient Egypt	103
4.1: Introduction to Ancient Egypt.....	103
4.1.1: The Rise of Egyptian Civilization	103
4.2: The Old Kingdom	108
4.2.1: The Old Kingdom	108
4.2.2: The First Intermediate Period	111
4.3: The Middle Kingdom.....	117
4.3.1: The Middle Kingdom.....	117
4.3.2: The Second Intermediate Period	120
4.4: The New Kingdom.....	125
4.4.1: The New Kingdom	125
4.4.2: Hatshepsut.....	129
4.4.3: The Third Intermediate Period.....	132
4.4.4: The Decline of Ancient Egypt.....	136
4.5: Ancient Egyptian Society	141
4.5.1: Ancient Egyptian Religion.....	141
4.5.2: Ancient Egyptian Art.....	146
4.5.3: Ancient Egyptian Monuments	151
4.5.4: Ancient Egyptian Trade	155
4.5.5: Ancient Egyptian Culture.....	158
4.6: Nubia and Ancient Egypt.....	163
4.6.1: Nubia and Ancient Culture	163
5: Ancient Greece and the Hellenistic World	167
5.1: Early Periods in Greek History.....	167
5.1.1: Greek Dark Ages	167
5.1.2: Archaic Greece	170
5.1.3: The Rise of Classical Greece	172
5.2: Sparta	179
5.2.1: Sparta.....	179
5.2.2: Culture in Classical Sparta	182
5.3: The Persian Wars.....	188
5.3.1: The Persian Wars.....	188

5.3.2: Effects of the Persian Wars.....	192
5.4: Athens	197
5.4.1: Athens.....	197
7.4.2: Athenian Society.....	200
5.5: Culture in Classical Greece.....	204
5.5.1: Classical Greek Philosophy	204
5.5.2: Classical Greek Poetry and History	209
5.5.3: Classical Greek Theater	213
5.5.4: Classical Greek Architecture	218
5.5.5: Scientific Advancements in the Classical Period	222
5.6: The Peloponnesian War	228
5.6.1: Introduction to the Peloponnesian War	228
5.6.2: Effects of the Peloponnesian War	232
5.7: Macedonian Conquest.....	237
5.7.1: The Rise of the Macedon	237
5.7.2: Alexander the Great.....	240
5.7.3: Alexander's Empire.....	243
5.7.4: The Legacy of Alexander the Great.....	247
6: The Roman World	255
6.1: The Etruscans	255
6.1.1: The Origins of Etruria.....	255
6.1.2: Etruscan Artifacts	259
6.1.3: Etruscan Religion	262
6.2: Early Rome	267
6.2.2: The Seven Kings	271
6.2.3: Early Roman Society	275
6.3: The Roman Republic	280
6.3.1: The Establishment of the Roman Republic	280
6.3.2: Structure of the Republic.....	283
6.3.3: Roman Society Under the Republic	287
6.3.4: Art and Literature in the Roman Republic	291
6.3.5: Republican Wars and Conquest.....	295
6.3.6: Crises of the Republic.....	300
6.4: The Roman Empire	308
6.4.1: Julius Caesar.....	308
6.4.2: Founding of the Roman Empire.....	311

6.4.3: The Pax Romana	314
6.4.4: The Julio-Claudian Emperors.....	318
6.4.5: The Last Julio-Claudian Emperors	324
6.5: The Flavian Dynasty	332
6.5.1: The Flavian Dynasty	332
6.5.2: Military Achievements of the Flavians	337
6.5.3: Eruptions of Vesuvius and Pompeii	340
6.5.4: Flavian Architecture	344
6.5.5: Fall of the Flavian Emperors	347
6.6: Nerva-Antonine Dynasty.....	354
6.6.1: The Nerva-Antonine Dynasty.....	354
6.6.2: Military Successes of the Nerva-Antonine Dynasty	358
6.6.3: Art and Culture Under the Nerva-Antonines	362
6.7: Christianity and the Late Roman Empire	367
6.7.1: Crises of the Roman Empire	367
6.7.2: Diocletian and the Tetrarchy	371
6.7.3: The Rise of Christianity	375
6.7.4: Constantine	378
6.7.5: The Shift East	382
6.7.6: The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire	385

1: The Study of History and the Rise of Civilization

1.1: The Study of History

1.1.1: Splitting History

Periodization—the process of categorizing the past into discrete, quantified, named blocks of time in order to facilitate the study and analysis of history—is always arbitrary and rooted in particular regional perspectives, but serves to organize and systematize historical knowledge.

Learning Objective

- Analyze the complications inherent to splitting history for the purpose of academic study

Key Points

- The question of what kind of inquiries historians pose, what knowledge they seek, and how they interpret the evidence that they find remains controversial. Historians draw conclusions from the past approaches to history but in the end, they always write in the context of their own time, current dominant ideas of how to interpret the past, and even subjective viewpoints.
- All events that are remembered and preserved in some original form constitute the historical record. The task of historians is to identify the sources that can most usefully contribute to the production of accurate accounts of the past. These sources, known as primary sources or evidence, were produced at the time under study and constitute the foundation of historical inquiry.
- Periodization is the process of categorizing the past into discrete, quantified named blocks of time in order to facilitate the study and analysis of history. This results in descriptive abstractions that provide convenient terms for periods of time with relatively stable characteristics. All systems of periodization are arbitrary.
- The common general split between prehistory, ancient history, Middle Ages,

modern history, and contemporary history is a Western division of the largest blocks of time agreed upon by Western historians. However, even within this largely accepted division the perspective of specific national developments and experiences often divides Western historians, as some periodizing labels will be applicable only to particular regions.

- The study of world history emerged as a distinct academic field in order to examine history from a global perspective rather than a solely national perspective of investigation. However, the field still struggles with an inherently Western periodization.
- World historians use a thematic approach to look for common patterns that emerge across all cultures. World history's periodization, as imperfect and biased as it is, serves as a way to organize and systematize knowledge.

Key Terms

- **World history** (Also global history or transnational history) – emerged as a distinct academic field in the 1980s. It examines history from a global perspective. World history should not be confused with comparative history, which, like world history, deals with the history of multiple cultures and nations, but does not do so on a global scale. World history identifies common patterns that emerge across all cultures.
- **Periodization** – The process or study of categorizing the past into discrete, quantified named blocks of time in order to facilitate the study and analysis of history. This results in descriptive abstractions that provide convenient terms for periods of time with relatively stable characteristics. However, determining the precise beginning and ending to any period is usually arbitrary.
- **Primary sources** – Original sources of information about a topic. In the study of history as an academic discipline, primary sources include artifact, document, diary, manuscript, autobiography, recording, or other source of information that was created at the time under study.

How Do We Write History?

The word *history* comes ultimately from Ancient Greek *historía*, meaning "inquiry," "knowledge from inquiry," or "judge." However, the question of what kind of inquiries

historians pose, what knowledge they seek, and how they interpret the evidence that they find remains controversial. Historians draw conclusions from past approaches to history, but in the end, they always write in the context of their own time, current dominant ideas of how to interpret the past, and even subjective viewpoints. Furthermore, current events and developments often trigger which past events, historical periods, or geographical regions are seen as critical and thus should be investigated. Finally, historical studies are designed to provide specific lessons for societies today. In the words of Benedetto Croce, Italian philosopher and historian, "All history is contemporary history."

All events that are remembered and preserved in some original form constitute the historical record. The task of historians is to identify the sources that can most usefully contribute to the production of accurate accounts of the past. These sources, known as primary sources or evidence, were produced at the time under study and constitute the foundation of historical inquiry. Ideally, a historian will use as many available primary sources as can be accessed, but in practice, sources may have been destroyed or may not be available for research. In some cases, the only eyewitness reports of an event may be memoirs, autobiographies, or oral interviews taken years later. Sometimes, the only evidence relating to an event or person in the distant past was written or copied decades or centuries later. Historians remain cautious when working with evidence recorded years, or even decades or centuries, after an event; this kind of evidence poses the question of to what extent witnesses remember events accurately. However, historians also point out that hardly any historical evidence can be seen as objective, as it is always a product of particular individuals, times, and dominant ideas. This is also why researchers try to find as many records of an event under investigation as possible, and it is not unusual that they find evidence that may present contradictory accounts of the same events. In general, the sources of historical knowledge can be separated into three categories: what is written, what is said, and what is physically preserved. Historians often consult all three.

Periodization

Periodization is the process of categorizing the past into discrete, quantified, named blocks of time in order to facilitate the study and analysis of history. This results in descriptive abstractions that provide convenient terms for periods of time with relatively stable characteristics. To the extent that history is continuous and cannot be generalized, all

systems of periodization are arbitrary. Moreover, determining the precise beginning and ending to any period is also a matter of arbitrary decisions. Eventually, periodizing labels are a reflection of very particular cultural and geographical perspectives, as well as specific subfields or themes of history (e.g., military history, social history, political history, intellectual history, cultural history, etc.). Consequently, not only do periodizing blocks inevitably overlap, but they also often seemingly conflict with or contradict one another. Some have a cultural usage (the Gilded Age), others refer to prominent historical events (the inter-war years: 1918–1939), yet others are defined by decimal numbering systems (the 1960s, the 17th century). Other periods are named after influential individuals whose impact may or may not have reached beyond certain geographic regions (the Victorian Era, the Edwardian Era, the Napoleonic Era).

Western Historical Periods

The common general split between prehistory (before written history), ancient history, Middle Ages, modern history, and contemporary history (history within the living memory) is a Western division of the largest blocks of time agreed upon by Western historians and representing the Western point of view. For example, the history of Asia or Africa cannot be neatly categorized following these periods.

However, even within this largely accepted division, the perspective of specific national developments and experiences often divides Western historians, as some periodizing labels will be applicable only to particular regions. This is especially true of labels derived from individuals or ruling dynasties, such as the Jacksonian Era in the United States, or the Merovingian Period in France. Cultural terms may also have a limited, even if larger, reach. For example, the concept of the Romantic period is largely meaningless outside of Europe and European-influenced cultures; even within those areas, different European regions may mark the beginning and the ending points of Romanticism differently.

Likewise, the 1960s, although technically applicable to anywhere in the world according to Common Era numbering, has a certain set of specific cultural connotations in certain countries, including sexual revolution, counterculture, or youth rebellion. However, those never emerged in certain regions (e.g., in Spain under Francisco Franco's authoritarian regime). Some historians have also noted that the 1960s, as a descriptive historical period, actually began in the late 1950s and ended in the early 1970s, because the cultural and

economic conditions that define the meaning of the period dominated longer than the actual decade of the 1960s.



Figure 1 Petrarch by Andrea del Castagno. Petrarch, Italian poet and thinker, conceived of the idea of a European "Dark Age," which later evolved into the tripartite periodization of Western history into Ancient, Middle Ages and Modern.

While world history (also referred to as global history or transnational history) emerged as a distinct academic field of historical study in the 1980s in order to examine history from a global perspective rather than a solely national perspective of investigation, it still struggles with an inherently Western periodization. The common splits used when designing comprehensive college-level world history courses (and thus also used in history textbooks that are usually divided into volumes covering pre- modern and modern eras) are still a result of certain historical developments presented from the perspective of the Western world and particular national experiences. However, even the split between pre-modern and modern eras is problematic because it is complicated by the question of how history educators, textbook authors, and publishers decide to categorize what is

known as the early modern era, which is traditionally a period between Renaissance and the end of the Age of Enlightenment. In the end, whether the early modern era is included in the first or the second part of a world history course frequently offered in U.S. colleges is a subjective decision of history educators. As a result, the same questions and choices apply to history textbooks written and published for the U.S. audience.

World historians use a thematic approach to identify common patterns that emerge across all cultures, with two major focal points: integration (how processes of world history have

drawn people of the world together) and difference (how patterns of world history reveal the diversity of the human experiences). The periodization of world history, as imperfect and biased as it is, serves as a way to organize and systematize knowledge. Without it, history would be nothing more than scattered events without a framework designed to help us understand the past.

1.1.2: Dates and Calendars

While various calendars were developed and used across millennia, cultures, and geographical regions, Western historical scholarship has unified the standards of determining dates based on the dominant Gregorian calendar.

Learning Objective

- Compare and contrast different calendars and how they affect our understanding of history

Key Points

- The first recorded calendars date to the Bronze Age, including the Egyptian and Sumerian calendars. A larger number of calendar systems of the Ancient Near East became accessible in the Iron Age and were based on the Babylonian calendar. A great number of Hellenic calendars also developed in Classical Greece and influenced calendars outside of the immediate sphere of Greek influence, giving rise to the various Hindu calendars, as well as to the ancient Roman calendar.
- Despite various calendars used across millennia, cultures, and geographical regions, Western historical scholarship has unified the standards of determining dates based on the dominant Gregorian calendar.
- Julius Caesar effected drastic changes in the existing timekeeping system. The New Year in 709 AUC began on January first and ran over 365 days until December 31. Further adjustments were made under Augustus, who introduced the concept of the leap year in 737 AUC (4 CE). The resultant Julian calendar remained in almost universal use in Europe until 1582.
- The Gregorian calendar, also called the Western calendar and the Christian calendar, is internationally the most widely used civil calendar today. It is named after Pope Gregory XIII, who introduced it in October, 1582. The calendar was a

refinement to the Julian calendar, amounting to a 0.002% correction in the length of the year.

- While the European Gregorian calendar eventually dominated the world and historiography, a number of other calendars have shaped timekeeping systems that are still influential in some regions of the world. These include the Islamic calendar, various Hindu calendars, and the Mayan calendar. A calendar era that is often used as an alternative naming of the long-accepted anno Domini/before Christ system is Common Era or Current Era, abbreviated CE. While both systems are an accepted standard, the Common Era system is more neutral and inclusive of a non-Christian perspective.

Key Terms

- **Mayan calendar** – A system of calendars used in pre-Columbian Mesoamerica, and in many modern communities in the Guatemalan highlands, Veracruz, Oaxaca and Chiapas, Mexico. The essentials of it are based upon a system that was in common use throughout the region, dating back to at least the fifth century BCE. It shares many aspects with calendars employed by other earlier Mesoamerican civilizations, such as the Zapotec and Olmec, and with contemporary or later calendars, such as the Mixtec and Aztec calendars.
- **Anno Domini** – The Medieval Latin term, which means *in the year of the Lord* but is often translated as *in the year of our Lord*. Dionysius Exiguus, of Scythia Minor, introduced the system based on this concept in 525, counting the years since the birth of Christ.
- **Islamic calendar** (Also Muslim calendar or Hijri calendar) – A lunar calendar consisting of 12 months in a year of 354 or 355 days. It is used to date events in many Muslim countries (concurrently with the Gregorian calendar), and is used by Muslims everywhere to determine the proper days on which to observe the annual fasting, to attend *Hajj*, and to celebrate other Islamic holidays and festivals. The first year equals 622 CE, during which time the emigration of Muhammad from Mecca to Medina, known as the Hijra, occurred.
- **Gregorian calendar** (Also the Western calendar and the Christian calendar) – A calendar that is internationally the most widely used civil calendar today. It is named

after Pope Gregory XIII, who introduced it in October 1582. The calendar was a refinement to the Julian calendar, amounting to a 0.002% correction in the length of the year.

- **Julian calendar** – A calendar introduced by Julius Caesar in 46 BCE (708 AUC), which was a reform of the Roman calendar. It took effect in 45 BCE (AUC 709), shortly after the Roman conquest of Egypt. It was the predominant calendar in the Roman world, most of Europe, and in European settlements in the Americas and elsewhere, until it was refined and gradually replaced by the Gregorian calendar, promulgated in 1582 by Pope Gregory XIII.

Calendars and Writing History

Methods of timekeeping can be reconstructed for the prehistoric period from at least the Neolithic period. The natural units for timekeeping used by most historical societies are the day, the solar year, and the lunation. The first recorded calendars date to the Bronze Age, and include the Egyptian and Sumerian calendars. A larger number of calendar systems of the Ancient Near East became accessible in the Iron Age and were based on the Babylonian calendar. One of these was calendar of the Persian Empire, which in turn gave rise to the Zoroastrian calendar, as well as the Hebrew calendar.

A great number of Hellenic calendars were developed in Classical Greece and influenced calendars outside of the immediate sphere of Greek influence. These gave rise to the various Hindu calendars, as well as to the ancient Roman calendar, which contained very ancient remnants of a pre-Etruscan ten-month solar year. The Roman calendar was reformed by Julius Caesar in 45 BCE. The Julian calendar was no longer dependent on the observation of the new moon, but simply followed an algorithm of introducing a leap day every four years. This created a dissociation of the calendar month from the lunation. The Gregorian calendar was introduced as a refinement of the Julian calendar in 1582 and is today in worldwide use as the *de facto* calendar for secular purposes.

Despite various calendars used across millennia, cultures, and geographical regions, Western historical scholarship has unified the standards of determining dates based on the dominant Gregorian calendar. Regardless of what historical period or geographical areas Western historians investigate and write about, they adjust dates from the original

timekeeping system to the Gregorian calendar. Occasionally, some historians decide to use both dates: the dates recorded under the original calendar used, and the date adjusted to the Gregorian calendar, easily recognizable to the Western student of history.

Julian Calendar

The old Roman year had 304 days divided into ten months, beginning with March. However, the ancient historian, Livy, gave credit to the second ancient Roman king, Numa Pompilius, for devising a calendar of twelve months. The extra months *Ianuarius* and *Februarius* had been invented, supposedly by Numa Pompilius, as stop-gaps. Julius Caesar realized that the system had become inoperable, so he effected drastic changes in the year of his third consulship. The New Year in 709 AUC (*ab urbe condita*— year from the founding of the City of Rome) began on January first and ran over 365 days until December 31. Further adjustments were made under Augustus, who introduced the concept of the leap year in 737 AUC (4 CE). The resultant Julian calendar remained in almost universal use in Europe until 1582. Marcus Terentius Varro introduced the *Ab urbe condita* epoch, assuming a foundation of Rome in 753 BCE. The system remained in use during the early medieval period until the widespread adoption of the Dionysian era in the Carolingian period. The seven-day week has a tradition reaching back to the Ancient Near East, but the introduction of the planetary week, which remains in modern use, dates to the Roman Empire period.

Gregorian Calendar

The Gregorian calendar, also called the Western calendar and the Christian calendar, is internationally the most widely used civil calendar today. It is named after Pope Gregory XIII, who introduced it in October, 1582. The calendar was a refinement to the Julian calendar, amounting to a 0.002% correction in the length of the year. The motivation for the reform was to stop the drift of the calendar with respect to the equinoxes and solstices—particularly the vernal equinox, which set the date for Easter celebrations.

Transition to the Gregorian calendar would restore the holiday to the time of the year in which it was celebrated when introduced by the early Church. The reform was adopted initially by the Catholic countries of Europe. Protestants and Eastern Orthodox countries continued to use the traditional Julian calendar, and eventually adopted the Gregorian

reform for the sake of convenience in international trade. The last European country to adopt the reform was Greece in 1923.

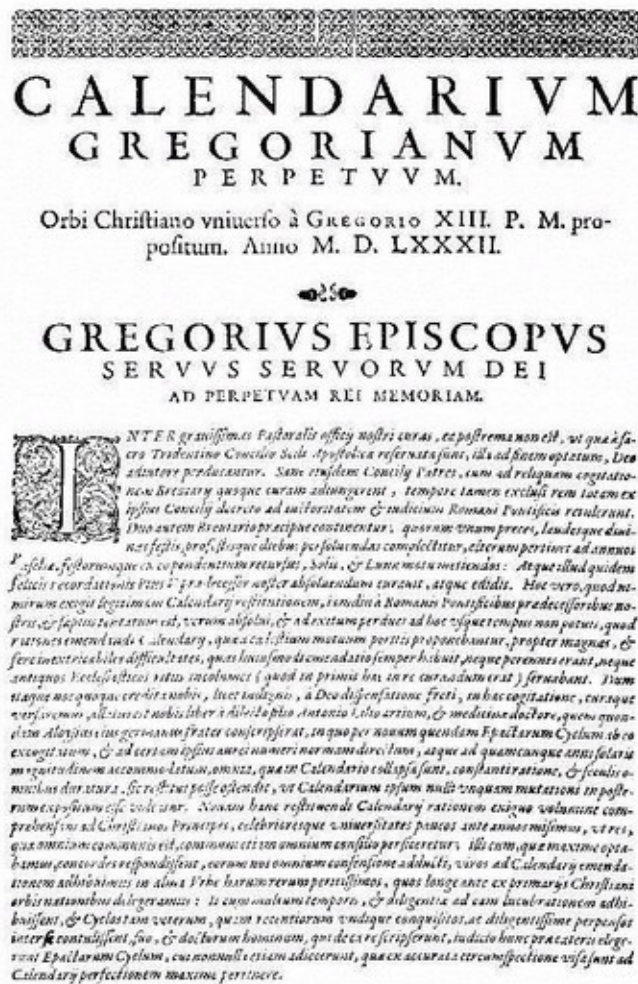


Figure 2 The first page of the papal bull "Inter Gravissimas" by which Pope Gregory XIII introduced his calendar.

During the period between 1582, when the first countries adopted the Gregorian calendar, and 1923, when the last European country adopted it, it was often necessary to indicate the date of some event in both the Julian calendar and in the Gregorian calendar. Even before 1582, the year sometimes had to be double dated because of the different beginnings of the year in various countries.

Calendars Outside of Europe

While the European Gregorian calendar eventually dominated the world and historiography, a number of other calendars have shaped timekeeping systems that are still influential in some regions of the world. The Islamic calendar determines the first year in 622 CE, during which the emigration of

Muhammad from Mecca to Medina, known as the Hijra, occurred. It is used to date events in many Muslim countries (concurrently with the Gregorian calendar), and is used by Muslims everywhere to determine the proper days on which to observe and celebrate Islamic religious practices (e.g., fasting), holidays, and festivals.

Various Hindu calendars developed in the medieval period with Gupta era astronomy as their common basis. Some of the more prominent regional Hindu calendars include the Nepali calendar, Assamese calendar, Bengali calendar, Malayalam calendar, Tamil calendar, the Vikrama Samvat (used in Northern India), and Shalivahana calendar. The

common feature of all regional Hindu calendars is that the names of the twelve months are the same (because the names are based in Sanskrit) although the spelling and pronunciation have come to vary slightly from region to region over thousands of years. The month that starts the year also varies from region to region. The Buddhist calendar and the traditional lunisolar calendars of Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand are also based on an older version of the Hindu calendar.

Of all the ancient calendar systems, the Mayan and other Mesoamerican systems are the most complex. The Mayan calendar had two years, the 260-day Sacred Round, or *tzolkin*, and the 365-day Vague Year, or *haab*. The essentials of the Mayan calendar are based upon a system that was in common use throughout the region, dating back to at least the fifth century BCE. It shares many aspects with calendars employed by other earlier Mesoamerican civilizations, such as the Zapotec and Olmec, and contemporary or later ones, such as the Mixtec and Aztec calendars. The Mayan calendar is still used in many modern communities in the Guatemalan highlands, Veracruz, Oaxaca and Chiapas, Mexico.

The first year was the Islamic year beginning in AD 622, during which the emigration of Muhammad from Mecca to Medina, known as the Hijra, occurred. Each numbered year is designated either "H" for *Hijra* or "AH" for the Latin *Anno Hegirae* ("in the year of the Hijra"). Hence, Muslims typically call their calendar the Hijri calendar.

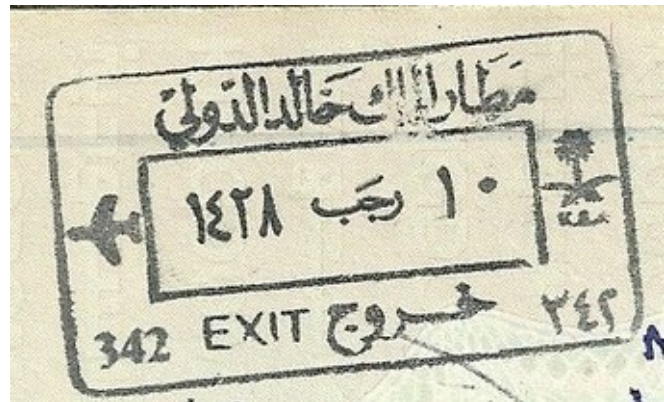


Figure 3 Islamic Calendar stamp issued at King Khaled airport (10 Rajab 1428 / 24 July 2007)

Anno Domini v. Common Era

The terms *anno Domini* (AD) and before Christ (BC) are used to label or number years in the Julian and Gregorian calendars. The term *anno Domini* is Medieval Latin, which means *in the year of the Lord*, but is often translated as *in the year of our Lord*. It is occasionally set out more fully as *anno Domini nostri Iesu* (or *Jesu Christi* ("in the year of Our Lord Jesus Christ")). Dionysius Exiguus of Scythia Minor introduced the AD system in AD 525,

counting the years since the birth of Christ. This calendar era is based on the traditionally recognized year of the conception or birth of Jesus of Nazareth, with AD counting years after the start of this epoch and BC denoting years before the start of the era. There is no year zero in this scheme, so the year AD 1 immediately follows the year 1 BC. This dating system was devised in 525, but was not widely used until after 800.

A calendar era that is often used as an alternative naming of the *anno Domini* is Common Era or Current Era, abbreviated CE. The system uses BCE as an abbreviation for "before the Common (or Current) Era." The CE/BCE designation uses the same numeric values as the AD/BC system so the two notations (CE/BCE and AD/BC) are numerically equivalent. The expression "Common Era" can be found as early as 1708 in English and traced back to Latin usage among European Christians to 1615, as *vulgaris aerae*, and to 1635 in English as *Vulgar Era*. Since the later 20th century, the use of CE and BCE have been popularized in academic and scientific publications, and more generally by authors and publishers wishing to emphasize secularism or sensitivity to non-Christians, because the system does not explicitly make use of religious titles for Jesus, such as "Christ" and *Dominus* ("Lord"), which are used in the BC/AD notation, nor does it give implicit expression to the Christian creed that Jesus is the Christ. While both systems are thus an accepted standard, the CE/BCE system is more neutral and inclusive of a non-Christian perspective.

1.1.3: The Imperfect Historical Record

While some primary sources are considered more reliable or trustworthy than others, hardly any historical evidence can be seen as fully objective since it is always a product of particular individuals, times, and dominant ideas.

Learning Objective

- Explain the consequences of the imperfect historical record

Key Points

- In the study of history as an academic discipline, a primary source is an artifact, document, diary, manuscript, autobiography, recording, or other source of information that was created at the time under study.

- History as an academic discipline is based on primary sources, as evaluated by the community of scholars for whom primary sources are absolutely fundamental to reconstructing the past. Ideally, a historian will use as many primary sources that were created during the time under study as can be accessed. In practice however, some sources have been destroyed, while others are not available for research.
- While some sources are considered more reliable or trustworthy than others, historians point out that hardly any historical evidence can be seen as fully objective since it is always a product of particular individuals, times, and dominant ideas.
- Historical method comprises the techniques and guidelines by which historians use primary sources and other evidence (including the evidence of archaeology) to research and write historical accounts of the past.
- Primary sources may remain in private hands or are located in archives, libraries, museums, historical societies, and special collections. Traditionally, historians attempt to answer historical questions through the study of written documents and oral accounts. They also use such sources as monuments, inscriptions, and pictures. In general, the sources of historical knowledge can be separated into three categories: what is written, what is said, and what is physically preserved. Historians often consult all three.
- Historians use various strategies to reconstruct the past when facing a lack of sources, including collaborating with experts from other academic disciplines, most notably archaeology.

Key Terms

- **Historical method** – A scholarly method that comprises the techniques and guidelines by which historians use primary sources and other evidence (including the evidence of archaeology) to research and write historical accounts of the past.
- **Primary source** – In the study of history as an academic discipline, an artifact, document, diary, manuscript, autobiography, recording, or other source of information that was created at the time under study. It serves as an original source of information about the topic.
- **Secondary source** – A document or recording that relates or discusses information originally found in a primary source. It contrasts with a primary source, which is an

original source of the information being discussed; a primary source can be a person with direct knowledge of a situation, or a document created by such a person. A secondary source involves generalization, analysis, synthesis, interpretation, or evaluation of the original information.

Primary Sources

In the study of history as an academic discipline, a primary source (also called original source or evidence) is an artifact, document, diary, manuscript, autobiography, recording, or other source of information that was created at the time under study. It serves as an original source of information about the topic. Primary sources are distinguished from secondary sources, which cite, comment on, or build upon primary sources. In some cases, a secondary source may also be a primary source, depending on how it is used. For example, a memoir would be considered a primary source in research concerning its author or about his or her friends characterized within it, but the same memoir would be a secondary source if it were used to examine the culture in which its author lived. "Primary" and "secondary" should be understood as relative terms, with sources categorized according to specific historical contexts and what is being studied.

Using Primary Sources: Historical Method

History as an academic discipline is based on primary sources, as evaluated by the community of scholars for whom primary sources are absolutely fundamental to reconstructing the past. Ideally, a historian will use as many primary sources that were created by the people involved at the time under study as can be accessed. In practice however, some sources have been destroyed, while others are not available for research. In some cases, the only eyewitness reports of an event may be memoirs, autobiographies, or oral interviews taken years later. Sometimes, the only evidence relating to an event or person in the distant past was written or copied decades or centuries later. Manuscripts that are sources for classical texts can be copies or fragments of documents. This is a common problem in classical studies, where sometimes only a summary of a book or letter, but not the actual book or letter, has survived. While some sources are considered more reliable or trustworthy than others (e.g., an original government document containing information about an event vs. a recording of a witness recalling the same event years later), historians point out that hardly any historical evidence can be seen as fully objective

as it is always a product of particular individuals, times, and dominant ideas. This is also why researchers try to find as many records of an event under investigation as possible, and attempt to resolve evidence that may present contradictory accounts of the same events.



Figure 4 This wall painting (known as The portrait of Paquius Proculo and currently preserved at the Naples National Archaeological Museum) was found in the Roman city of Pompeii and serves as a complex example of a primary source.

The fresco would not tell much to historians without corresponding textual and archaeological evidence that helps to establish who the portrayed couple might have been. The man wears a toga, the mark of a Roman citizen, and holds a rotulus, suggesting he is involved in public and/or cultural affairs. The woman holds a stylus and wax tablet, emphasizing that she is educated and literate. It is suspected, based on the physical features of the couple, that they are Samnites, which may explain the desire to show off the status they have reached in Roman society.

Historical method comprises the techniques and guidelines by which historians use primary sources and other evidence (including the evidence of archaeology) to research and write historical accounts of the past. Historians continue to debate what aspects and practices of investigating primary sources should be considered, and what constitutes a primary source when developing the most effective historical method. The question of the nature, and even the possibility, of a sound historical method is so central that it has been continuously raised in the philosophy of history as a question of epistemology.

Finding Primary Sources

Primary sources may remain in private hands or are located in archives, libraries, museums, historical societies, and special collections. These can be public or private.

Some are affiliated with universities and colleges, while others are government entities. Materials relating to one area might be spread over a large number of different institutions. These can be distant from the original source of the document. For example, the Huntington Library in California houses a large number of documents from the United Kingdom. While the development of technology has resulted in an increasing number of digitized sources, most primary source materials are not digitized and may only be represented online with a record or finding aid.

Traditionally, historians attempt to answer historical questions through the study of written documents and oral accounts. They also use such sources as monuments, inscriptions, and pictures. In general, the sources of historical knowledge can be separated into three categories: what is written, what is said, and what is physically preserved. Historians often consult all three. However, writing is the marker that separates history from what comes before.

Archaeology is one discipline that is especially helpful to historians. By dealing with buried sites and objects, it contributes to the reconstruction of the past. However, archaeology is constituted by a range of methodologies and approaches that are independent from history. In other words, archaeology does not "fill the gaps" within textual sources but often contrasts its conclusions against those of contemporary textual sources.

Archaeology also provides an illustrative example of how historians can be helped when written records are missing. Unearthing artifacts and working with archaeologists to interpret them based on the expertise of a particular historical era and cultural or geographical area is one effective way to reconstruct the past. If written records are missing, historians often attempt to collect oral accounts of particular events, preferably by eyewitnesses, but sometimes, because of the passage of time, they are forced to work with the following generations. Thus, the question of the reliability of oral history has been widely debated.

When dealing with many government records, historians usually have to wait for a specific period of time before documents are declassified and available to researchers. For political reasons, many sensitive records may be destroyed, withdrawn from collections, or hidden, which may also encourage researchers to rely on oral histories. Missing records of events,

or processes that historians believe took place based on very fragmentary evidence, forces historians to seek information in records that may not be a likely sources of information. As archival research is always time-consuming and labor-intensive, this approach poses the risk of never producing desired results, despite the time and effort invested in finding informative and reliable resources. In some cases, historians are forced to speculate (this should be explicitly noted) or simply admit that we do not have sufficient information to reconstruct particular past events or processes.

1.1.4: Historical Bias

Biases have been part of historical investigation since the ancient beginnings of the discipline. While more recent scholarly practices attempt to remove earlier biases from history, no piece of historical scholarship can be fully free of biases.

Learning Objective

- Identify some examples of historical bias

Key Points

- Regardless of whether they are conscious or learned implicitly within cultural contexts, biases have been part of historical investigation since the ancient beginnings of the discipline. As such, history provides an excellent example of how biases change, evolve, and even disappear.
- Early attempts to make history an empirical, objective discipline (most notably by Voltaire) did not find many followers. Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, European historians only strengthened their biases. As Europe gradually dominated the world through the self-imposed mission to colonize nearly all the other continents, Eurocentrism prevailed in history.
- Even within the Eurocentric perspective, not all Europeans were equal; Western historians largely ignored aspects of history, such as class, gender, or ethnicity. Until the rapid development of social history in the 1960s and 1970s, mainstream Western historical narratives focused on political and military history, while cultural or social history was written mostly from the perspective of the elites.
- The biased approach to history-writing transferred also to history-teaching. From the origins of national mass schooling systems in the 19th century, the teaching of

history to promote national sentiment has been a high priority. History textbooks in most countries have been tools to foster nationalism and patriotism and to promote the most favorable version of national history.

- Germany attempts to be an example of how to remove nationalistic narratives from history education. The history curriculum in Germany is characterized by a transnational perspective that emphasizes the all-European heritage, minimizes the idea of national pride, and fosters the notion of civil society centered on democracy, human rights, and peace.
- Despite progress and increased focus on groups that have been traditionally excluded from mainstream historical narratives (people of color, women, the working class, the poor, the disabled, LGBTQI-identified people, etc.), bias remains a component of historical investigation.

Key Term

- **Eurocentrism** – The practice of viewing the world from a European or generally Western perspective with an implied belief in the pre-eminence of Western culture. It may also be used to describe a view centered on the history or eminence of white people. The term was coined in the 1980s, referring to the notion of European exceptionalism and other Western equivalents, such as American exceptionalism.

Bias in Historical Writing

Bias is an inclination or outlook to present or hold a partial perspective, often accompanied by a refusal to consider the possible merits of alternative points of view. Regardless of whether conscious or learned implicitly within cultural contexts, biases have been part of historical investigation since the ancient beginnings of the discipline. As such, history provides an excellent example of how biases change, evolve, and even disappear.

History as a modern academic discipline based on empirical methods (in this case, studying primary sources in order to reconstruct the past based on available evidence), rose to prominence during the Age of Enlightenment. Voltaire, a French author and thinker, is credited to have developed a fresh outlook on history that broke from the tradition of narrating diplomatic and military events and emphasized customs, social history (the history of ordinary people) and achievements in the arts and sciences. His

Essay on Customs traced the progress of world civilization in a universal context, thereby rejecting both nationalism and the traditional Christian frame of reference. Voltaire was also the first scholar to make a serious attempt to write the history of the world, eliminating theological frameworks and emphasizing economics, culture, and political history. He was the first to emphasize the debt of medieval culture to Middle Eastern civilization. Although he repeatedly warned against political bias on the part of the historian, he did not miss many opportunities to expose the intolerance and frauds of the Catholic Church over the ages—a topic that was Voltaire's life-long intellectual interest.

Voltaire's early attempts to make history an empirical, objective discipline did not find many followers. Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, European historians only strengthened their biases. As Europe gradually benefited from the ongoing scientific progress and dominated the world in the self-imposed mission to colonize nearly all other continents, Eurocentrism prevailed in history. The practice of viewing and presenting the world from a European or generally Western perspective, with an implied belief in the pre-eminence of Western culture, dominated among European historians who contrasted the progressively mechanized character of European culture with traditional hunting, farming and herding societies in many of the areas of the world being newly conquered and colonized. These included the Americas, Asia, Africa and, later, the Pacific and Australasia. Many European writers of this time construed the history of Europe as paradigmatic for the rest of the world. Other cultures were identified as having reached a stage that Europe itself had already passed: primitive hunter-gatherer, farming, early civilization, feudalism and modern liberal-capitalism. Only Europe was considered to have achieved the last stage. With this assumption, Europeans were also presented as racially superior, and European history as a discipline became essentially the history of the dominance of white peoples.

However, even within the Eurocentric perspective, not all Europeans were equal; Western historians largely ignored aspects of history, such as class, gender, or ethnicity. Until relatively recently (particularly the rapid development of social history in the 1960s and 1970s), mainstream Western historical narratives focused on political and military history, while cultural or social history was written mostly from the perspective of the elites.

Consequently, what was in fact an experience of a selected few (usually white males of upper classes, with some occasional mentions of their female counterparts), was typically

presented as the illustrative experience of the entire society. In the United States, some of the first to break this approach were African American scholars who at the turn of the 20th century wrote histories of black Americans and called for their inclusion in the mainstream historical narrative.

The Historians' History of the World is a 25-volume encyclopedia of world history originally published in English near the beginning of the 20th century. It is quite extensive but its perspective is entirely Western Eurocentric. For example, while four volumes focus on the history of England (with Scotland and Ireland included in one of them), "Poland, the Balkans, Turkey, minor Eastern states, China, Japan" are all described in one volume. It was compiled by Henry Smith Williams, a medical doctor and author, as well as other authorities on history, and published in New York in 1902 by Encyclopædia Britannica and the Outlook Company.

Bias in the Teaching of History

The biased approach to historical writing is present in the teaching of history as

well. From the origins of national mass schooling systems in the 19th century, the teaching of history to promote national sentiment has been a high priority. Until today, in most countries history textbook are tools to foster nationalism and patriotism and promote the most favorable version of national history. In the United States, one of the most striking examples of this approach is the continuous narrative of the United States as a state established on the principles of personal liberty and democracy. Although aspects of U.S.

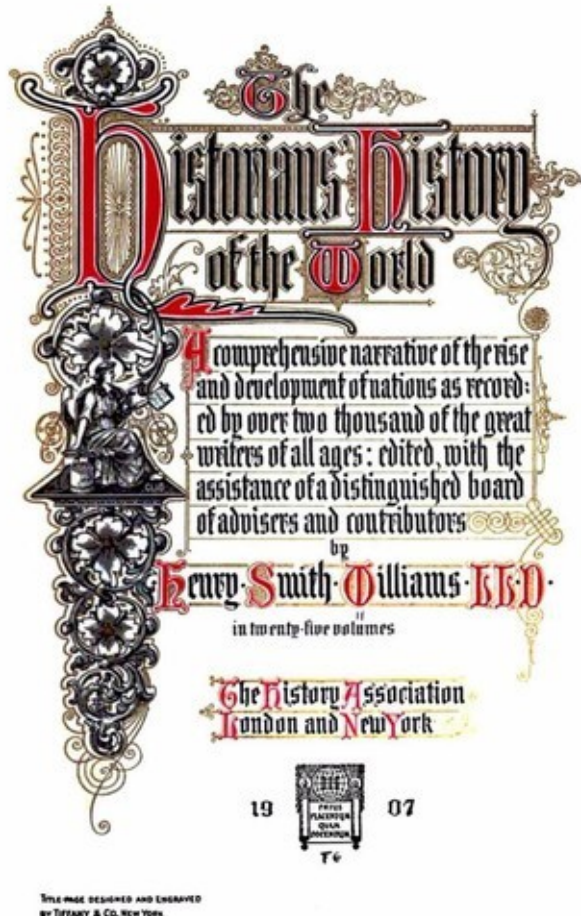


Figure 5 The title page to *The Historians' History of the World: A Comprehensive Narrative of the Rise and Development of Nations as Recorded by over two thousand of the Great Writers of all Ages*, 1907.

history, such as slavery, genocide of American Indians, or disfranchisement of the large segments of the society for decades after the onset of the American statehood, are now taught in most (yet not all) American schools, they are presented as marginal in the larger narrative of liberty and democracy.

In many countries, history textbooks are sponsored by the national government and are written to put the national heritage in the most favorable light, although academic historians have often fought against the politicization of the textbooks, sometimes with success. Interestingly, the 21st-century Germany attempts to be an example of how to remove nationalistic narratives from history education. As the 20th-century history of Germany is filled with events and processes that are rarely a cause of national pride, the history curriculum in Germany (controlled by the 16 German states) is characterized by a transnational perspective that emphasizes the all-European heritage, minimizes the idea of national pride, and fosters the notion of civil society centered on democracy, human rights, and peace. Yet, even in the rather unusual German case, Eurocentrism continues to dominate.

The challenge to replace national, or even nationalist, perspectives with a more inclusive transnational or global view of human history is also still very present in college-level history curricula. In the United States after World War I, a strong movement emerged at the university level to teach courses in Western Civilization with the aim to give students a common heritage with Europe. After 1980, attention increasingly moved toward teaching world history or requiring students to take courses in non-western cultures. Yet, world history courses still struggle to move beyond the Eurocentric perspective, focusing heavily on the history of Europe and its links to the United States.

Despite all the progress and much more focus on the groups that have been traditionally excluded from mainstream historical narratives (people of color, women, the working class, the poor, the disabled, LGBTQI-identified people, etc.), bias remains a component of historical investigation, whether it is a product of nationalism, author's political views, or an agenda-driven interpretation of sources. It is only appropriate to state that the present world history book, while written in accordance with the most recent scholarly and educational practices, has been written and edited by authors trained in American

universities and published in the United States. As such, it is also not free from both national (U.S.) and individual (authors') biases.

Attributions

- Splitting History
 - "Periodization." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Periodization>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "World history." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_history. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "History." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Primary source." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Primary_source. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Historical method." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Historical_method. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Early modern period." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Early_modern_period. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Petrarch_by_Bargilla.jpg." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Periodization#/media/File:Petrarch_by_Bargilla.jpg. Wikipedia Public domain.
- Dates and Calendars
 - "Julian calendar." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julian_calendar. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Gregorian calendar." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gregorian_calendar. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Anno Domini." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anno_Domini. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Maya calendar." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maya_calendar. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Calendar." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calendar>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "ab urbe condita." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ab_urbe_condita. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Common Era." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_Era. Wikipedia CC

BY-SA 3.0.

- "Islamic calendar." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_calendar. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "History of calendars." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_calendars. Wikipedia CC BY- SA 3.0.
- "King_Khaled_airport_exit_stamp.jpg." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_calendar#/media/File:King_Khaled_airport_exit_stam.jpg Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Inter-grav.jpg." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gregorian_calendar#/media/File:Inter-grav.jpg. Wikipedia Public domain.
- The Imperfect Historical Record
 - Portrait of Paquius Proculo." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portrait_of_Paquius_Proculo. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "History." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Primary source." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Primary_source. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Historical method." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Historical_method. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Secondary source." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secondary_source. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Pompeii-couple.jpg." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Primary_source#/media/File:Pompeii-couple.jpg. Wikipedia Public domain.
- Historical Bias
 - "Social history." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_history. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Bias." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bias>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "History." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Voltaire." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voltaire#History>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- "Eurocentrism." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eurocentrism>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "The Historians' History of the World."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Historians%27_History_of_the_World.
Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "800px-The_Historians'_History_of_the_World_-_Title_Page.jpg."
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/01/The_Historians%27_History_of_the_World_-_Title_Page.jpg/220px-The_Historians%27_History_of_the_World_-_Title_Page.jpg Wikipedia
Public domain.

1.2: Precursors to Civilization

1.2.1: The Evolution of Humans

Human evolution is an ongoing and complex process that began seven million years ago.

Learning Objective

- To understand the process and timeline of human evolution

Key Points

- Humans began to evolve about seven million years ago, and progressed through four stages of evolution. Research shows that the first modern humans appeared 200,000 years ago.
- Neanderthals were a separate species from humans. Although they had larger brain capacity and interbred with humans, they eventually died out.
- A number of theories examine the relationship between environmental conditions and human evolution.
- The main human adaptations have included bipedalism, larger brain size, and reduced sexual dimorphism.

Key Terms

- **Aridity hypothesis** – The theory that the savannah was expanding due to increasingly arid conditions, which then drove hominin adaptation.
- **Turnover pulse hypothesis** – The theory that extinctions due to environmental conditions hurt specialist species more than generalist ones, leading to greater evolution among specialists.
- **Red Queen hypothesis** – The theory that species must constantly evolve in order to compete with co-evolving animals around them.
- **Encephalization** – An evolutionary increase in the complexity and/or size of the brain.
- **Sexual dimorphism** – Differences in size or appearance between the sexes of an animal species.
- **Social brain hypothesis** – The theory that improving cognitive capabilities would allow hominins to influence local groups and control resources.

- **Toba catastrophe theory** – The theory that there was a near-extinction event for early humans about 70,000 years ago.
- **Savannah hypothesis** – The theory that hominins were forced out of the trees they lived in and onto the expanding savannah; as they did so, they began walking upright on two feet.
- **Hominids** – A primate of the family Hominidae that includes humans and their fossil ancestors.
- **Bipedal** – Describing an animal that uses only two legs for walking.

Human evolution began with primates. Primate development diverged from other mammals about 85 million years ago. Various divergences among apes, gibbons, orangutans occurred during this period, with *Homini* (including early humans and chimpanzees) separating from *Gorillini* (gorillas) about 8 million years ago. Humans and chimps then separated about 7.5 million years ago.

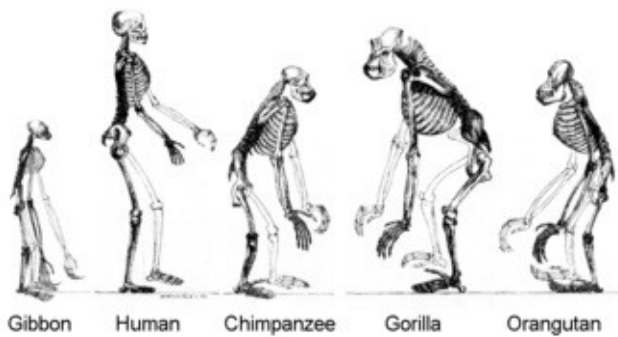


Figure 6 Skeletal structure of humans and other primates.

Generally, it is believed that hominids first evolved in Africa and then migrated to other areas. There were four main stages of human evolution. The first, between four and seven million years ago, consisted of the proto hominins *Sahelanthropus*, *Orrorin* and *Ardipithecus*. These humans may have

been bipedal, meaning they walked upright on two legs. The second stage, around four million years ago, was marked by the appearance of *Australopithecus*, and the third, around 2.7 million years ago, featured *Paranthropus*.

The fourth stage features the genus *Homo*, which existed between 1.8 and 2.5 million years ago. *Homo habilis*, which used stone tools and had a brain about the size of a chimpanzee, was an early hominin in this period. Coordinating fine hand movements needed for tool use may have led to increasing brain capacity. This was followed by *Homo erectus* and *Homo ergaster*, who had double the brain size and may have been the first to control fire and use more complex tools. *Homo heidelbergensis* appeared about 800,000

years ago, and modern humans, *Homo sapiens*, about 200,000 years ago. Humans acquired symbolic culture and language about 50,000 years ago.

Homo habilis has a rounded occipital, no transverse torus, a relatively high and thin skull, a small brain volume, large teeth, and molars that increase towards the back of the jaw. *Homo erectus* has a flexed occipital, a transverse torus, a relatively low and thick skull, a small-medium brain volume, large teeth, and a varying molar gradient. *Homo floresiensis* has a flexed occipital, a transverse torus, a relatively low and thick skull, a small brain volume, small teeth, and molars that decrease towards the back of the jaw. *Homo naledi* has a flexed occipital, a transverse torus, a relatively high and thin skull, a small brain volume, small teeth, and molars that increase towards the back of the jaw.

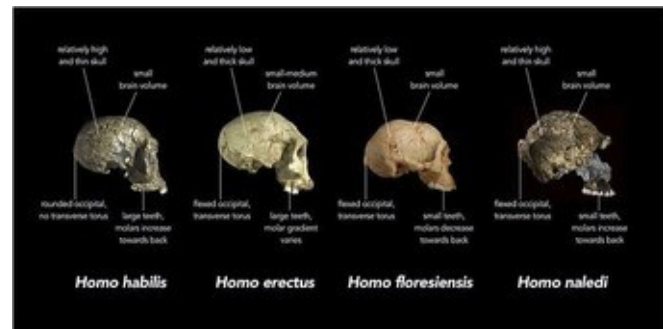


Figure 7 Comparison of skull features among early humans.

Neanderthals

A separate species, *Homo neanderthalensis*, had a common ancestor with humans about 660,000 years ago, and engaged in interbreeding with *Homo sapiens* about 45,000 to 80,000 years ago. Although their brains were larger, Neanderthals had fewer social and technological innovations than humans, and they eventually died out.

Theories of Early Human Evolution

The savannah hypothesis states that hominins were forced out of the trees they lived in and onto the expanding savannah; as they did so, they began walking upright on two feet. This idea was expanded in the aridity hypothesis, which posited that the savannah was expanding due to increasingly arid conditions resulting in hominin adaptation. Thus, during periods of intense aridification, hominins also were pushed to evolve and adapt.

The turnover pulse hypothesis states that extinctions due to environmental conditions hurt specialist species more than generalist ones. While generalist species spread out when environmental conditions change, specialist species become more specialized and have a greater rate of evolution. The Red Queen hypothesis states that species must constantly

evolve in order to compete with co-evolving animals around them. The social brain hypothesis states that improving cognitive capabilities would allow hominins to influence local groups and control resources. The Toba catastrophe theory states that there was a near-extinction event for early humans about 70,000 years ago.

Human Adaptations

Bipedalism, or walking upright, is one of the main human evolutionary adaptations.

Advantages to be found in bipedalism include the freedom of the hands for labor and less physically taxing movement. Walking upright better allows for long distance travel and hunting, for a wider field of vision, a reduction of the amount of skin exposed to the sun, and overall thrives in a savannah environment. Bipedalism resulted in skeletal changes to the legs, knee and ankle joints, spinal vertebrae, toes, and arms. Most significantly, the pelvis became shorter and rounded, with a smaller birth canal, making birth more difficult for humans than other primates. In turn, this resulted in shorter gestation (as babies need to be born before their heads become too large), and more helpless infants who are not fully developed before birth.

Larger brain size, also called encephalization, began in early humans with *Homo habilis* and continued through the Neanderthal line (capacity of 1,200 - 1,900 cm³). The ability of the human brain to continue to grow after birth meant that social learning and language were possible. It is possible that a focus on eating meat, and cooking, allowed for brain growth. Modern humans have a brain volume of 1250 cm³.

Humans have reduced sexual dimorphism, or differences between males and females, and hidden estrus, which means the female is fertile year-round and shows no special sign of fertility. Human sexes still have some differences between them, with males being slightly larger and having more body hair and less body fat. These changes may be related to pair bonding for long-term raising of offspring. Other adaptations include lessening of body hair, a chin, a descended larynx, and an emphasis on vision instead of smell.

1.2.2: The Neolithic Revolution

The Neolithic Revolution and invention of agriculture allowed humans to settle in groups, specialize, and develop civilizations.

Learning Objective

- Explain the significance of the Neolithic Revolution

Key Points

- During the Paleolithic Era, humans grouped together in small societies and subsisted by gathering plants, and fishing, hunting or scavenging wild animals.
- The Neolithic Revolution references a change from a largely nomadic hunter-gatherer way of life to a more settled, agrarian-based one, with the inception of the domestication of various plant and animal species—depending on species locally available and likely also influenced by local culture.
- There are several competing (but not mutually exclusive) theories as to the factors that drove populations to take up agriculture, including the Hilly Flanks hypothesis, the Feasting model, the Demographic theories, the evolutionary/intentionality theory, and the largely discredited Oasis Theory.
- The shift to agricultural food production supported a denser population, which in turn supported larger sedentary communities, the accumulation of goods and tools, and specialization in diverse forms of new labor.
- The nutritional standards of Neolithic populations were generally inferior to that of hunter-gatherers, and they worked longer hours and had shorter life expectancies.
- Life today, including our governments, specialized labor, and trade, is directly related to the advances made in the Neolithic Revolution.

Key Terms

- **Demographic theories** – Theories about how sedentary populations may have driven agricultural changes.
- **Specialization** – A process where laborers focused on one specialty area rather than creating all needed items.
- **Feasting model** – The theory that displays of power through feasting drove agricultural technology.
- **Oasis Theory** – The theory that humans were forced into close association with animals due to changes in climate.
- **Paleolithic Era** – A period of history that spans from 2.5 million to 20,000 years ago, during which time humans evolved, used stone tools, and lived as hunter-

gatherers.

- **Hunter-gatherer** – A nomadic lifestyle in which food is obtained from wild plants and animals; in contrast to an agricultural lifestyle, which relies mainly on domesticated species.
- **Neolithic Revolution** – The world's first historically verifiable advancement in agriculture. It took place around 12,000 years ago.
- **Evolutionary/Intentionality theory** – The theory that domestication was part of an evolutionary process between humans and plants.
- **Hilly Flanks hypothesis** – The theory that agriculture began in the hilly flanks of the Taurus and Zagros Mountains, where the climate was not drier, and fertile land supported a variety of plants and animals amenable to domestication.

Before the Rise of Civilization: The Paleolithic Era

The first humans evolved in Africa during the Paleolithic Era, or Stone Age, which spans the period of history from 2.5 million to about 10,000 BCE. During this time, humans lived in small groups as hunter-gatherers, with clear gender divisions for labor. The men hunted animals while the women gathered food, such as fruit, nuts and berries, from the local area. Simple tools made of stone, wood, and bone (such as hand axes, flints and spearheads) were used throughout the period. Fire was controlled, which created heat and light, and allowed for cooking.

Humankind gradually evolved from early members of the genus *Homo*—such as *Homo habilis*, who used simple stone tools—into fully behaviorally and anatomically modern humans (*Homo sapiens*) during the Paleolithic era. During the end of the Paleolithic, specifically the Middle and or Upper Paleolithic, humans began to produce the earliest works of art and engage in religious and spiritual behavior, such as burial and ritual. Paleolithic humans were nomads, who often moved their settlements as food became scarce. This eventually resulted in humans spreading out from Africa (beginning roughly 60,000 years ago) and into Eurasia, Southeast Asia, and Australia. By about 40,000 years ago, they had entered Europe, and by about 15,000 years ago, they had reached North America followed by South America.



Figure 8 Paleoliths (artifacts from the Paleolithic), such as this stone ball, demonstrate some of the stone technologies that the early humans used as tools and weapons.

During about 10,000 BCE, a major change occurred in the way humans lived; this would have a cascading effect on every part of human society and culture. That change was the Neolithic Revolution.

The Neolithic Revolution: From Hunter-Gatherer to Agriculturalist

The beginning of the Neolithic Revolution in different regions has been dated from perhaps 8,000 BCE in the Kuk Early Agricultural Site of Melanesia Kuk to 2,500 BCE in Sub-Saharan Africa, with

some considering the developments of 9,000-7,000 BCE in the Fertile Crescent to be the most important. This transition everywhere is associated with the change from a largely nomadic hunter-gatherer way of life to a more settled, agrarian-based one, due to the inception of the domestication of various plant and animal species—depending on the species locally available, and probably also influenced by local culture.

It is not known why humans decided to begin cultivating plants and domesticating animals. While more labor-intensive, the people must have seen the relationship between cultivation of grains and an increase in population. The domestication of animals provided a new source of protein, through meat and milk, along with hides and wool, which allowed for the production of clothing and other objects.

There are several competing (but not mutually exclusive) theories about the factors that drove populations to take up agriculture. The most prominent of these are:

- The Oasis Theory, originally proposed by Raphael Pumpelly in 1908, and popularized by V. Gordon Childe in 1928, suggests as the climate got drier due to the Atlantic depressions shifting northward, communities contracted to oases where they were forced into close association with animals. These animals were then

domesticated together with planting of seeds. However, this theory has little support amongst archaeologists today because subsequent climate data suggests that the region was getting wetter rather than drier.

- The Hilly Flanks hypothesis, proposed by Robert Braidwood in 1948, suggests that agriculture began in the hilly flanks of the Taurus and Zagros mountains, where the climate was not drier, as Childe had believed, and that fertile land supported a variety of plants and animals amenable to domestication.
- The Feasting model by Brian Hayden suggests that agriculture was driven by ostentatious displays of power, such as giving feasts, to exert dominance. This system required assembling large quantities of food, a demand which drove agricultural technology.
- The Demographic theories proposed by Carl Sauer and adapted by Lewis Binford and Kent Flannery posit that an increasingly sedentary population outgrew the resources in the local environment and required more food than could be gathered. Various social and economic factors helped drive the need for food.
- The Evolutionary/Intentionality theory, developed by David Rindos and others, views agriculture as an evolutionary adaptation of plants and humans. Starting with domestication by protection of wild plants, it led to specialization of location and then full-fledged domestication.

Effects of the Neolithic Revolution on Society

The traditional view is that the shift to agricultural food production supported a denser population, which in turn supported larger sedentary communities, the accumulation of goods and tools, and specialization in diverse forms of new labor. Overall a population could increase its size more rapidly when resources were more available. The resulting larger societies led to the development of different means of decision making and governmental organization. Food surpluses made possible the development of a social elite freed from labor, who dominated their communities and monopolized decision-making. There were deep social divisions and inequality between the sexes, with women's status declining as men took on greater roles as leaders and warriors. Social class was

determined by occupation, with farmers and craftsmen at the lower end, and priests and warriors at the higher.

Effects of the Neolithic Revolution on Health

Neolithic populations generally had poorer nutrition, shorter life expectancies, and a more labor-intensive lifestyle than hunter-gatherers. Diseases jumped from animals to humans, and agriculturalists suffered from more anemia, vitamin deficiencies, spinal deformations, and dental pathologies.

Overall Impact of the Neolithic Revolution on Modern Life

The way we live today is directly related to the advances made in the Neolithic Revolution. From the governments we live under, to the specialized work laborers do, to the trade of goods and food, humans were irrevocably changed by the switch to sedentary agriculture and domestication of animals. Human population swelled from five million to seven billion today.

Attributions

- The Evolution of Humans
 - "Timeline of Human Evolution."
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hSSzn4blwZg>. YouTube Youtube License.
 - "Human Evolution." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_evolution. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Evolution of Human Intelligence."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evolution_of_human_intelligence. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "A synthesis of the theories and concepts of early human evolution."
<http://rstb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/370/1663/20140064>. The Royal Society Publishing CC BY 4.0.
 - "Comparison_of_skull_features_of_Homo_naledi_and_other_early_human_species.jpg." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homo_naledi. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Ape_skeletons.png." <https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&ved=0ahUKEwjS3MXKh8vNAhXCOiYKHVQ> Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.

- The Neolithic Revolution
 - "Neolithic Revolution." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neolithic_Revolution.
Wikipedia CC BY- SA.
 - "Neolithic Revolution." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neolithic%20Revolution>.
Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Civilization makes its debut (8000 - 3000 BC)."
[https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/World_History/Ancient_Civilizations#Civilization_makes_its_debut_\(8000_-_3000_BC\)](https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/World_History/Ancient_Civilizations#Civilization_makes_its_debut_(8000_-_3000_BC)) CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Before the Rise of Civilization."
http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/World_History/Ancient_Civilizations%23Before_the_Rise_of_Ci Wikibooks CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Paleolithic." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paleolithic>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "The Neolithic Revolution and Sumer."
<http://globaleconomics.wikispaces.com/The+Neolithic+Revolution+and+Sumer>. Global Economics CC BY 3.0.
 - "Paleolithic." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paleolithic_period. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.

2: Ancient Mesopotamian Civilizations

2.1: The First Urban Civilizations

2.1.1: The Sumerians

The Sumerian people lived in Mesopotamia from the 27th-20th century BCE. They were inventive and industrious, creating large city-states, trading goods, mass-producing pottery, and perfecting many forms of technology.

Learning Objective

- To understand the history and accomplishments of the Sumerian people

Key Points

- The Sumerians were a people living in Mesopotamia from the 27th-20th century BCE.
- The major periods in Sumerian history were the Ubaid period (6500-4100 BCE), the Uruk period (4100-2900 BCE), the Early Dynastic period (2900-2334 BCE), the Akkadian Empire period (2334-2218 BCE), the Gutian period (2218-2047 BCE), Sumerian Renaissance/Third Dynasty of Ur (2047-1940 BCE), and then decline.
- Many Sumerian clay tablets have been found with writing. Initially, pictograms were used, followed by cuneiform and then ideograms.
- Sumerians believed in anthropomorphic polytheism, or of many gods in human form that were specific to each city-state.
- Sumerians invented or perfected many forms of technology, including the wheel, mathematics, and cuneiform script.

Key Terms

- **City-states** – A city that with its surrounding territory forms an independent state.
- **Cuneiform script** – Wedge-shaped characters used in the ancient writing systems of Mesopotamia, surviving mainly on clay tablets.

- **Ideograms** – Written characters symbolizing an idea or entity without indicating the sounds used to say it.
- **Pictograms** – A pictorial symbol for a word or phrase. They are the earliest known forms of writing.
- **Pantheon** – The collective gods of a people or religion.
- **Epic of Gilgamesh** – An epic poem from the Third Dynasty of Ur (circa 2100 BCE), which is seen as the earliest surviving great work of literature.
- **Anthropomorphic** – Having human characteristics.

"Sumerian" is the name given by the Semitic-speaking Akkadians to non-Semitic speaking people living in Mesopotamia. City-states in the region, which were organized by canals and boundary stones and dedicated to a patron god or goddess, first rose to power during the prehistoric Ubaid and Uruk periods. Sumerian written history began in the 27th century BCE, but the first intelligible writing began in the 23rd century BCE. Classical Sumer ends with the rise of the Akkadian Empire in the 23rd century BCE, and only enjoys a brief renaissance in the 21st century BCE. The Sumerians were eventually absorbed into the Akkadian/Babylonian population.

Periods in Sumerian History

The Ubaid period (6500-4100 BCE) saw the first settlement in southern Mesopotamia by farmers who brought irrigation agriculture. Distinctive, finely painted pottery was evident during this time.

The Uruk period (4100-2900 BCE) saw several transitions. First, pottery began to be mass-produced. Second, trade goods began to flow down waterways in southern Mesopotamia, and large, temple-centered cities (most likely theocratic and run by priests-kings) rose up to facilitate this trade. Slave labor was also utilized.

The Early Dynastic period (2900-2334 BCE) saw writing, in contrast to pictograms, become commonplace and decipherable. The Epic of Gilgamesh mentions several leaders, including Gilgamesh himself, who were likely historical kings. The first dynastic king was Etana, the 13th king of the first dynasty of Kish. War was on the increase, and cities erected walls for self-preservation. Sumerian culture began to spread from southern Mesopotamia into surrounding areas.



Figure 9 Sumerian necklaces and headgear discovered in the royal (and individual) graves, showing the way they may have been worn.

During the Akkadian Empire period (2334-2218 BCE), many in the region became bilingual in both Sumerian and Akkadian. Toward the end of the empire, though, Sumerian became increasingly a literary language.

The Gutian period (2218-2047 BCE) was marked by a period of chaos and decline, as GUTI barbarians defeated the Akkadian military but were unable to support the civilizations in place.

The Sumerian Renaissance/Third Dynasty of Ur (2047-1940 BCE) saw the rulers Ur-Nammu and Shulgi, whose power extended into southern Assyria. However, the region was becoming more Semitic, and the Sumerian language became a religious language.

The Sumerian Renaissance ended with invasion by the Amorites, whose dynasty of Isin continued until 1700 BCE, at which point Mesopotamia came under

Babylonian rule.

Language and Writing

Many Sumerian clay tablets written in cuneiform script have been discovered. They are not the oldest example of writing, but nevertheless represent a great advance in the human ability to write down history and create literature. Initially, pictograms were used, followed by cuneiform, and then ideograms. Letters, receipts, hymns, prayers, and stories have all been found on clay tablets.

Religion

Sumerians believed in anthropomorphic polytheism, or of many gods in human form, which were specific to each city-state. The core pantheon consisted of *An* (heaven), *Enki* (a healer and friend to humans), *Enlil* (gave spells spirits must obey), *Inanna* (love and war), *Utu* (sun-god), and *Sin* (moon-god).

Technology

Sumerians invented or improved a wide range of technology, including the wheel, cuneiform script, arithmetic, geometry, irrigation, saws and other tools, sandals, chariots, harpoons, and beer.



Figure 10 This clay tablet shows a bill of sale for a male slave and building, circa 2600 BCE.

2.1.2: The Assyrians

The Assyrians were a major Semitic empire of the Ancient Near East, who existed as an independent state for approximately nineteen centuries between c. 2500-605 BCE, enjoying widespread military success in its heyday.

Learning Objective

- Describe key characteristics and notable events of the Assyrian Empire

Key Points

- Centered on the Upper Tigris River in northern Mesopotamia, the Assyrians came to rule powerful empires at several times, the last of which grew to be the largest and most powerful empire the world had yet seen.
- At its peak, the Assyrian empire stretched from Cyprus in the Mediterranean Sea to Persia, and from the Caucasus Mountains (Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan) to the Arabian Peninsula and Egypt. It was at the height of technological, scientific, and cultural achievements for its time.
- In the Old Assyrian period, Assyria established colonies in Asia Minor and the

Levant, and asserted itself over southern Mesopotamia under king Ilushuma.

- Assyria experienced fluctuating fortunes in the Middle Assyrian period, with some of its kings finding themselves under the influence of foreign rulers while others eclipsed neighboring empires.
- Assyria became a great military power during the Neo-Assyrian period, and saw the conquests of large empires, such as Egyptians, the Phoenicians, the Hittites, and the Persians, among others.
- After its fall in the late 600s BCE, Assyria remained a province and geo-political entity under various empires until the mid-7th century CE.

Key Terms

- **Aššur** – The original capital of the Assyrian Empire, which dates back to 2600 BCE.
- **Assyrian Empire** – A major Semitic kingdom of the Ancient Near East, which existed as an independent state for a period of approximately nineteen centuries from c. 2500-605 BCE.

The Assyrian Empire was a major Semitic kingdom, and often empire, of the Ancient Near East. It existed as an independent state for a period of approximately 19 centuries from c. 2500 BCE to 605 BCE, which spans the Early Bronze Age through to the late Iron Age. For a further 13 centuries, from the end of the 7th century BCE to the mid-7th century CE, it survived as a geo-political entity ruled, for the most part, by foreign powers (although a number of small Neo-Assyrian states arose at different times throughout this period).



Figure 11 This map shows the extent of the empires of Egypt (orange), Hatti (blue), the Kassite kingdom of Babylon (black), Assyria (yellow), and Mitanni (brown). The extent of the Achaean/Mycenaean civilization is shown in purple.

Centered on the Upper Tigris River, in northern Mesopotamia (northern Iraq, northeast Syria, and southeastern Turkey), the Assyrians came to rule powerful empires at several times, the last of which grew to be the largest and most powerful empire the world had yet seen.

As a substantial part of the greater Mesopotamian "Cradle of Civilization,"

Assyria was at the height of technological, scientific, and cultural achievements for its time. At its peak, the Assyrian empire stretched from Cyprus in the Mediterranean Sea to Persia (Iran), and from the Caucasus Mountains (Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan) to the Arabian Peninsula and Egypt. Assyria is named for its original capital, the ancient city of Ašur (a.k.a., Ashur) which dates to c. 2600 BCE and was located in what is now the Saladin Province of northern Iraq. Ashur was originally one of a number of Akkadian city states in Mesopotamia. In the late 24th century BCE, Assyrian kings were regional leaders under Sargon of Akkad, who united all the Akkadian Semites and Sumerian-speaking peoples of Mesopotamia under the Akkadian Empire (c. 2334 BC-2154 BCE). Following the fall of the Akkadian Empire, c. 2154 BCE, and the short-lived succeeding Sumerian Third Dynasty of Ur, which ruled southern Assyria, Assyria regained full independence.

The history of Assyria proper is roughly divided into three periods, known as Old Assyrian (late 21st- 18th century BCE), Middle Assyrian (1365-1056 BCE), and Neo-Assyrian (911-612 BCE). These periods roughly correspond to the Middle Bronze Age, Late Bronze Age, and Early Iron Age, respectively. In the Old Assyrian period, Assyria established colonies in Asia Minor and the Levant. Under king Ilushuma, it asserted itself over southern Mesopotamia. From the late 19th century BCE, Assyria came into conflict with the newly created state of Babylonia, which eventually eclipsed the older Sumero-Akkadian states in the south, such as Ur, Isin, Larsa and Kish. Assyria experienced fluctuating fortunes in the Middle Assyrian period. Assyria had a period of empire under Shamshi-Adad I and Ishme-Dagan in the 19th and 18th centuries BCE. Following the reigns of these two kings, it found itself under Babylonian and Mitanni-Hurrian domination for short periods in the 18th and 15th centuries BCE, respectively.

However, a shift in the Assyrian's dominance occurred with the rise of the Middle Assyrian Empire (1365 BCE-1056 BCE). This period saw the reigns of great kings, such as Ashur-uballit I, Arik-den-ili, Tukulti-Ninurta I, and Tiglath-Pileser I. Additionally, during this period, Assyria overthrew Mitanni and eclipsed both the Hittite Empire and Egyptian Empire in the Near East. Long wars helped build Assyria into a warrior society, supported by landed nobility, which supplied horses to the military. All free male citizens were required to serve in the military, and women had very low status.

Beginning with the campaigns of Adad-nirari II from 911 BCE, Assyria again showed itself to be a great power over the next three centuries during the Neo-Assyrian period. It overthrew the Twenty-Fifth dynasty of Egypt, and conquered a number of other notable civilizations, including Babylonia, Elam, Media, Persia, Phoenicia/Canaan, Aramea (Syria), Arabia, Israel, and the Neo-Hittites. They drove the Ethiopians and Nubians from Egypt, defeated the Cimmerians and Scythians, and exacted tribute from Phrygia, Magan, and Punt, among others.

After its fall (between 612-605 BCE), Assyria remained a province and geo-political entity under the Babylonian, Median, Achaemenid, Seleucid, Parthian, Roman, and Sassanid Empires, until the Arab Islamic invasion and conquest of Mesopotamia in the mid-7th century CE when it was finally dissolved.

Assyria is mainly remembered for its military victories, technological advancements (such as using iron for weapons and building roads), use of torture to inspire fear, and a written history of conquests. Its military had not only general troops, but charioteers, cavalry, bowmen, and lancers.

Attributions

- The Sumerians
 - "Gutian Dynasty of Sumer."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gutian_dynasty_of_Sumer. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "The Epic of Gilgamesh." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epic_of_Gilgamesh.
Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Cuneiform Script." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuneiform_script. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0. "Sumer." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sumer>. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0. "Bill_of_sale_Louvre_AO3765.jpg."
<https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&ved=0ahUKEwjakJWOwMvNAhUC7YMKHa> Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "headress.JPG."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Reconstructed_sumerian_headgear_necklaces_british Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- The Assyrians
 - "Assyria." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assyria>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "History of the Assyrian People." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Assyrian_people. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 2.0.
 - "Assyrians: Cavalry and Conquests." <http://www.ushistory.org/civ/4d.asp>. Ancient Civilizations CC BY 3.0.
 - "The Assyrian Empire." <http://cdaworldhistory.wikidot.com/the-assyrian-empires>. CDA's World History Wiki CC BY 3.0.
 - "Assyria." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assyria%23mediaviewer/File:14_century_BC_Eastern.png. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

2.2: Akkadian Empire

2.2.1: River Valley Civilizations

The first civilizations formed in river valleys, and were characterized by a caste system and a strong government that controlled water access and resources.

Learning Objective

- Explain why early civilizations arose on the banks of rivers

Key Points

- Rivers were attractive locations for the first civilizations because they provided a steady supply of drinking water and game, made the land fertile for growing crops, and allowed for easy transportation.
- Early river civilizations were all hydraulic empires that maintained power and control through exclusive control over access to water. This system of government arose through the need for flood control and irrigation, which requires central coordination and a specialized bureaucracy.
- Hydraulic hierarchies gave rise to the established permanent institution of impersonal government, since changes in ruling were usually in personnel, but not in the structure of government.

Key Terms

- **Fertile Crescent** – A crescent-shaped region containing the comparatively moist and fertile land of otherwise arid and semi-arid Western Asia, and the Nile Valley and Nile Delta of northeast Africa. Often called the cradle of civilization.
- **Hydraulic empire** – A social or governmental structure that maintains power through exclusive control of water access.
- **Caste** – A form of social stratification characterized by endogamy (hereditary transmission of a lifestyle). This lifestyle often includes an occupation, ritual status in a hierarchy, and customary social interaction and exclusion based on cultural notions of purity and pollution.
- **Water crisis** – There is not enough fresh, clean water to meet local demand.
- **Water shortage** – Water is less available due to climate change, pollution, or

overuse.

- **Neolithic Revolution** – Also called the Agricultural Revolution, this was the wide-scale transition of human cultures from being hunter-gatherers to being settled agriculturalists.
- **Water stress** – Difficulty in finding fresh water, or the depletion of available water sources.

The First Civilizations

The first civilizations formed on the banks of rivers. The most notable examples are the Ancient Egyptians, who were based on the Nile, the Mesopotamians in the Fertile Crescent on the Tigris/Euphrates Rivers, the Ancient Chinese on the Yellow River, and the Ancient India on the Indus. These early civilizations began to form around the time of the Neolithic Revolution (12000 BCE).

Rivers were attractive locations for the first civilizations because they provided a steady supply of drinking water and made the land fertile for growing crops.

Moreover, goods and people could be transported easily, and the people in these civilizations could fish and hunt the animals that came to drink water.

Additionally, those lost in the wilderness could return to civilization by traveling downstream, where the major centers of human population tend to concentrate.



Figure 12 Most of the Ancient Egyptian settlements occurred along the northern part of the Nile, pictured in this satellite image taken from orbit by NASA.

Hydraulic Empires

Though each civilization was uniquely different, we can see common patterns amongst these first civilizations since they were all based around rivers. Most notably, these early civilizations were all hydraulic empires. A hydraulic empire (also known as hydraulic despotism, or water monopoly empire) is a social or governmental structure which maintains power through exclusive control over water access. This system of government

arises through the need for flood control and irrigation, which requires central coordination and a specialized bureaucracy. This political structure is commonly characterized by a system of hierarchy and control based around class or caste. Power, both over resources (food, water, energy) and a means of enforcement, such as the military, are vital for the maintenance of control. Most hydraulic empires exist in desert regions, but imperial China also had some such characteristics, due to the exacting needs of rice cultivation. The only hydraulic empire to exist in Africa was under the Ajuran State near the Jubba and Shebelle Rivers in the 15th century CE.

Karl August Wittfogel, the German scholar who first developed the notion of the hydraulic empire, argued in his book, *Oriental Despotism* (1957), that strong government control characterized these civilizations because a particular resource (in this case, river water) was both a central part of economic processes and environmentally limited. This fact made controlling supply and demand easier and allowed the establishment of a more complete monopoly, and also prevented the use of alternative resources to compensate. However, it is also important to note that complex irrigation projects predated states in Madagascar, Mexico, China and Mesopotamia, and thus it cannot be said that a key, limited economic resource necessarily mandates a strong centralized bureaucracy.

According to Wittfogel, the typical hydraulic empire government has no trace of an independent aristocracy—in contrast to the decentralized feudalism of medieval Europe. Though tribal societies had structures that were usually personal in nature, exercised by a patriarch over a tribal group related by various degrees of kinship, hydraulic hierarchies gave rise to the established permanent institution of impersonal government. Popular revolution in such a state was very difficult; a dynasty might die out or be overthrown by force, but the new regime would differ very little from the old one. Hydraulic empires were usually destroyed by foreign conquerors.

Water Scarcity Today

Access to water is still crucial to modern civilizations; water scarcity affects more than 2.8 billion people globally. Water stress is the term used to describe difficulty in finding fresh water or the depletion of available water sources. Water shortage is the term used when water is less available due to climate change, pollution, or overuse. Water crisis is the term

used when there is not enough fresh, clean water to meet local demand. Water scarcity may be physical, meaning there are inadequate water resources available in a region, or economic, meaning governments are not managing available resources properly. The United Nations Development Programme has found that water scarcity generally results from the latter issue.

2.2.2: The Akkadian Empire

The Akkadian Empire flourished in the 24th and 22nd centuries BCE, ruled by Sargon and Naram-Sin. It eventually collapsed in 2154 BCE, due to the invasion of barbarian peoples and large-scale climatic changes.

Learning Objective

- Describe the key political characteristics of the Akkadian Empire

Key Points

- The Akkadian Empire was an ancient Semitic empire centered in the city of Akkad and its surrounding region in ancient Mesopotamia, which united all the indigenous Akkadian speaking Semites and the Sumerian speakers under one rule within a multilingual empire.
- King Sargon, the founder of the empire, conquered several regions in Mesopotamia and consolidated his power by instating Akkadian officials in new territories. He extended trade across Mesopotamia and strengthened the economy through rain-fed agriculture in northern Mesopotamia.
- The Akkadian Empire experienced a period of successful conquest under Naram-Sin due to benign climatic conditions, huge agricultural surpluses, and the confiscation of wealth.
- The empire collapsed after the invasion of the Gutians. Changing climatic conditions also contributed to internal rivalries and fragmentation, and the empire eventually split into the Assyrian Empire in the north and the Babylonian empire in the south.

Key Terms

- **Gutians** – A group of barbarians from the Zagros Mountains who invaded the

Akkadian Empire and contributed to its collapse.

- **Sargon** – The first king of the Akkadians. He conquered many of the surrounding regions to establish the massive multilingual empire.
- **Akkadian Empire** – An ancient Semitic empire centered in the city of Akkad and its surrounding region in ancient Mesopotamia.
- **Cuneiform** – One of the earliest known systems of writing, distinguished by its wedge-shaped marks on clay tablets, and made by means of a blunt reed for a stylus.
- **Semites** – Today, the word "Semite" may be used to refer to any member of any of a number of peoples of ancient Southwest Asian descent, including the Akkadians, Phoenicians, Hebrews (Jews), Arabs, and their descendants.
- **Naram-Sin** – An Akkadian king who conquered Ebla, Armum, and Magan, and built a royal residence at Tell Brak.

The Akkadian Empire was an ancient Semitic empire centered in the city of Akkad, which united all the indigenous Akkadian speaking Semites and Sumerian speakers under one rule. The Empire controlled Mesopotamia, the Levant, and parts of Iran.



Figure 13 The Akkadian Empire is pictured in brown. The directions of the military campaigns are shown as yellow arrows.

Its founder was Sargon of Akkad (2334–2279 BCE). Under Sargon and his successors, the Akkadian Empire reached its political peak between the 24th and 22nd centuries BCE. Akkad is sometimes regarded as the first empire in history.

Sargon and His Dynasty

Sargon claimed to be the son of La'ibum or Itti-Bel, a humble gardener, and possibly a hierodule, or priestess to Ishtar or Inanna. Some later claimed that his

mother was an "entu" priestess (high priestess). Originally a cupbearer to king Ur-Zababa of Kish, Sargon became a gardener, which gave him access to a disciplined corps of workers who also may have served as his first soldiers. Displacing Ur-Zababa, Sargon

was crowned king and began a career of foreign conquest. He invaded Syria and Canaan on four different campaigns, and spent three years subduing the countries of "the west" to unite them with Mesopotamia "into a single empire."

Sargon's empire reached westward as far as the Mediterranean Sea and perhaps Cyprus (Kaptara); northward as far as the mountains; eastward over Elam; and as far south as Magan (Oman)—a region over which he purportedly reigned for 56 years, though only four "year-names" survive. He replaced rulers with noble citizens of Akkad. Trade extended from the silver mines of Anatolia to the lapis lazuli mines in Afghanistan, and from the cedars of Lebanon to the copper of Magan. The empire's breadbasket was the rain-fed agricultural system of northern Mesopotamia (Assyria), and a chain of fortresses was built to control the imperial wheat production.

Sargon, throughout his long life, showed special deference to the Sumerian deities, particularly Inanna (Ishtar), his patroness, and Zababa, the warrior god of Kish. He called himself "the anointed priest of Anu" and "the great ensi of Enlil."

Sargon managed to crush his opposition even in old age. Difficulties also broke out in the reign of his sons, Rimush (2278–2270 BCE), who was assassinated by his own courtiers, and Manishtushu (2269–2255 BCE), who reigned for 15 years. He, too, was likely assassinated in a palace conspiracy.



Figure 14 Bronze head of a king, most likely Sargon of Akkad but possibly Naram-Sin. Unearthed in Nineveh (now in Iraq).

Naram-Sin

Manishtushu's son and successor, Naram-Sin (called, Beloved of Sin) (2254–2218 BCE), assumed the imperial title "King Naram-Sin, King of the Four Quarters." He was also, for the first time in Sumerian culture, addressed as "the god of Agade (Akkad)." This

represents a marked shift away from the previous religious belief that kings were only representatives of the people toward the gods.

Naram-Sin conquered Ebla and Arum, and built a royal residence at Tell Brak, a crossroads at the heart of the Khabur River basin of the Jezirah. Naram-Sin also conquered Magan and created garrisons to protect the main roads. This productive period of Akkadian conquest may have been based upon benign climatic conditions, huge agricultural surpluses, and the confiscation of the wealth of other peoples.

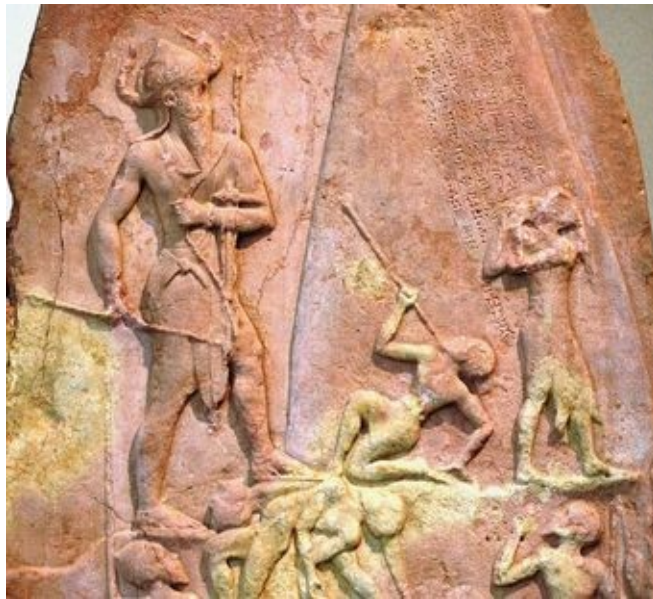


Figure 15 Stele of Naram-Sin

This stele commemorates Naram-Sin's victory against the Lullubi from Zagros in 2260 BCE. Naram-Sin is depicted to be wearing a horned helmet, a symbol of divinity, and is also portrayed in a larger scale in comparison to others to emphasize his superiority.

Living in the Akkadian Empire

Future Mesopotamian states compared themselves to the Akkadian Empire, which they saw as a classical standard in

governance. The economy was dependent on irrigated farmlands of southern Iraq, and rain-fed agriculture of Northern Iraq. There was often a surplus of agriculture but shortages of other goods, like metal ore, timber, and building stone. Art of the period often focused on kings, and depicted somber and grim conflict and subjugation to divinities. Sumerians and Akkadians were bilingual in each other's languages, but Akkadian gradually replaced Sumerian. The empire had a postal service, and a library featuring astronomical observations.

Collapse of the Akkadian Empire

The Empire of Akkad collapsed in 2154 BCE, within 180 years of its founding. The collapse ushered in a Dark Age period of regional decline that lasted until the rise of the Third Dynasty of Ur in 2112 BCE. By the end of the reign of Naram-Sin's son, Shar-kali-

sharri (2217-2193 BCE), the empire had weakened significantly. There was a period of anarchy between 2192 BC and 2168 BCE. Some centralized authority may have been restored under Shu-Durul (2168-2154 BCE), but he was unable to prevent the empire collapsing outright from the invasion of barbarian peoples, known as the Gutians, from the Zagros Mountains.

Little is known about the Gutian period or for how long it lasted. Cuneiform sources suggest that the Gutians' administration showed little concern for maintaining agriculture, written records, or public safety; they reputedly released all farm animals to roam about Mesopotamia freely, and soon brought about famine and rocketing grain prices. The Sumerian king Ur-Nammu (2112-2095 BCE) later cleared the Gutians from Mesopotamia during his reign.

The collapse of rain-fed agriculture in the Upper Country due to drought meant the loss of the agrarian subsidies which had kept the Akkadian Empire solvent in southern Mesopotamia. Rivalries between pastoralists and farmers increased. Attempts to control access to water led to increased political instability; meanwhile, severe depopulation occurred.

After the fall of the Akkadian Empire, the Akkadian people coalesced into two major Akkadian speaking nations: Assyria in the north, and, a few centuries later, Babylonia in the south.

2.2.3: Ur

The city-state of Ur in Mesopotamia was important and wealthy, and featured highly centralized bureaucracy. It is famous for the Ziggurat of Ur, a temple whose ruins were discovered in modern day.

Learning Objective

- To understand the significance of the city-state of Ur

Key Points

- Ur was a major Sumerian city-state located in Mesopotamia, founded circa 3800 BCE.

- Cuneiform tablets show that Ur was a highly centralized, wealthy, bureaucratic state during the third millennium BCE.
- The Ziggurat of Ur was built in the 21st century BCE, during the reign of Ur-Nammu, and was reconstructed in the 6th century BCE by Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon.
- Control of Ur passed among various peoples until the Third Dynasty of Ur, which featured the strong kings Ur-Nammu and Shulgi.
- Ur was uninhabited by 500 BCE.

Key Terms

- **Sargon the Great** – A Semitic emperor of the Akkadian Empire, known for conquering Sumerian city-states in the 24th and 23rd centuries BCE.
- **Ziggurat** – A rectangular stepped tower, sometimes surmounted by a temple.
- **Sumerian** – A group of non-Semitic people living in ancient Mesopotamia.
- **Cuneiform** – Wedge-shaped characters imprinted onto clay tablets, used in ancient writing systems of Mesopotamia.

A Major Mesopotamian City

Ur was a major Sumerian city-state located in Mesopotamia, marked today by Tell el-



Figure 16 This map shows Mesopotamia in the third millennium BCE, with Ur in the south.

Muqayyar in southern Iraq. It was founded circa 3800 BCE, and was recorded in written history from the 26th century BCE. Its patron god was Nanna, the moon god, and the city's name literally means "the abode of Nanna."

Cuneiform tablets show that Ur was, during the third millennium BCE, a highly centralized, wealthy, bureaucratic state. The discovery of the Royal Tombs, dating from about the 25th century BCE, showed that the area had luxury items made out of

precious metals and semi-precious stones, which would have required importation. Some

estimate that Ur was the largest city in the world from 2030-1980 BCE, with approximately 65,000 people.

The Ziggurat of Ur

This temple was built in the 21st century BCE, during the reign of Ur-Nammu, and was reconstructed in the 6th century BCE by Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon. The ruins, which cover an area of 3,900 feet by 2,600 feet, were uncovered in the 1930s. It was part of a temple complex that served as an administrative center for the city of Ur, and was dedicated to Nanna, the moon god.

Ziggurats were massive structures built in the ancient Mesopotamian valley and western Iranian plateau, having the form of a terraced step pyramid of successively receding stories or levels. The Ziggurat of Ur measured 64 m (210 ft) in length, 45 m (148 ft) in width and over 30 m (98 ft) in height. The height is speculative, as only the foundations of the Sumerian ziggurat have survived.



Figure 17 The Ziggurat of Ur - This is a reconstruction of Ur-Nammu's ziggurat.

Control of Ur

Between the 24th and 22nd century BCE, Ur was controlled by Sargon the Great, of the Akkadian Empire. After the fall of this empire, Ur was ruled by the barbarian Gutians, until King Ur-Nammu came to power, circa 2047 - 2030 BCE (the Third Dynasty of Ur).

Advances during this time included the building of temples, like the Ziggurat, better agricultural irrigation, and a code of laws, called the Code of Ur-Nammu, which preceded the Code of Hammurabi by 300 years.

Shulgi succeeded Ur-Nammu, and was able to increase Ur's power by creating a highly centralized bureaucratic state. Shulgi, who eventually declared himself a god, ruled from 2029-1982 BCE, and was well-known for at least two thousand years after.

Three more kings, Amar-Sin, Shu0Sin and Ibbi-Sin, ruled Ur before it fell to the Elamites in 1940 BCE. Although Ur lost its political power, it remained economically important. It was

ruled by the first dynasty of Babylonia, then part of the Sealand Dynasty, then by the Kassites before falling to the Assyrian Empire from the 10th-7th century BE. After the 7th century BCE, it was ruled by the Chaldean Dynasty of Babylon. It began its final decline around 550 BCE, and was uninhabited by 500 BE. The final decline was likely due to drought, changing river patterns and the silting of the Persian Gulf.

Attributions

- River Valley Civilizations
 - "Hydraulic Empire." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hydraulic_empire. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Water Scarcity." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Water_scarcity. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "River Civilization." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/River_civilization. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "caste." <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/caste>. Wiktionary CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Nile." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Nile_River_and_delta_from_orbit.jpg. Wikipedia Public domain.
- The Akkadian Empire
 - "Akkadian Empire." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Akkadian_Empire. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Cuneiform." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuneiform>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Akkadian Empire." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Akkadian_Empire. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Sargon of Akkad." http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/4/44/Sargon_of_Akkad.jpg/253px-Sargon_of_Akkad.jpg. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Akkadian Empire." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Akkadian_Empire. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
- Ur
 - "Ur." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ur>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Ziggurat." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ziggurat>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- "Ziggurat of Ur." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ziggurat_of_Ur. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Ur." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ur>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Shulgi." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shulgi>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "zigg.jpeg."
<https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&ved=0ahUKEwiZhY3Th8zNAhUKrB4KHQLqWZXxuRMW-7AUXHuHHGQ&ust=1467249270371533&cad=rja>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Meso2mil-English.JPG."
<https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&ved=0ahUKEwicj9-Gh8zNAhUEKB4KHTeXABlQjRwIBw&url=https%3A%2F%2Fen.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2F> Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

2.3: Babylonia

2.3.1: Babylon

Following the collapse of the Akkadians, the Babylonian Empire flourished under Hammurabi, who conquered many surrounding peoples and empires, in addition to developing an extensive code of law and establishing Babylon as a "holy city" of southern Mesopotamia.

Learning Objective

- Describe key characteristics of the Babylonian Empire under Hammurabi

Key Points

- A series of conflicts between the Amorites and the Assyrians followed the collapse of the Akkadian Empire, out of which Babylon arose as a powerful city-state c. 1894 BCE.
- Babylon remained a minor territory for a century after it was founded, until the reign of its sixth Amorite ruler, Hammurabi (1792-1750 BCE), an extremely efficient ruler who established a bureaucracy with taxation and centralized government.
- Hammurabi also enjoyed various military successes over the whole of southern Mesopotamia, modern-day Iran and Syria, and the old Assyrian Empire in Asian Minor.
- After the death of Hammurabi, the First Babylonian Dynasty eventually fell due to attacks from outside its borders.

Key Terms

- **Marduk** – The south Mesopotamian god that rose to supremacy in the pantheon over the previous god, Enlil.
- **Hammurabi** – The sixth king of Babylon, who, under his rule, saw Babylonian advancements, both militarily and bureaucratically.
- **Code of Hammurabi** – A code of law that echoed and improved upon earlier written laws of Sumer, Akkad, and Assyria.
- **Amorites** – An ancient Semitic-speaking people from ancient Syria who also occupied large parts of Mesopotamia in the 21st Century BCE.

The Rise of the First Babylonian Dynasty

Following the disintegration of the Akkadian Empire, the Sumerians rose up with the Third Dynasty of Ur in the late 22nd century BCE, and ejected the barbarian Gutians from southern Mesopotamia. The Sumerian "Ur-III" dynasty eventually collapsed at the hands of the Elamites, another Semitic people, in 2002 BCE. Conflicts between the Amorites (Western Semitic nomads) and the Assyrians continued until Sargon I (1920-1881 BCE) succeeded as king in Assyria and withdrew Assyria from the region, leaving the Amorites in control (the Amorite period).

One of these Amorite dynasties founded the city-state of Babylon circa 1894 BCE, which would ultimately take over the others and form the short-lived first Babylonian empire, also called the Old Babylonian Period.

A chieftain named Sumuabum appropriated the then relatively small city of Babylon from the neighboring Mesopotamian city state of Kazallu, turning it into a state in its own right. Sumuabum appears never to have been given the title of King, however.

The Babylonians Under Hammurabi

Babylon remained a minor territory for a century after it was founded, until the reign of its sixth Amorite ruler, Hammurabi (1792-1750 BCE). He was an efficient ruler, establishing a centralized bureaucracy with taxation. Hammurabi freed Babylon from Elamite dominance, and then conquered the whole of southern Mesopotamia, bringing stability and the name of Babylonia to the region.

The armies of Babylonia under Hammurabi were well-disciplined, and he was able to invade modern-day Iran to the east and conquer the pre-Iranic Elamites, Gutians and Kassites. To the west, Hammurabi enjoyed military success against the Semitic states of the Levant (modern Syria), including the powerful kingdom of Mari. Hammurabi also entered into a protracted war with the Old Assyrian Empire for control of Mesopotamia and the Near East. Assyria had extended control over parts of Asia Minor from the 21st century BCE, and from the latter part of the 19th century BCE had asserted itself over northeast Syria and central Mesopotamia as well. After a protracted, unresolved struggle over decades with the Assyrian king Ishme-Dagan, Hammurabi forced his successor, Mut-

Ashkur, to pay tribute to Babylon c. 1751 BCE, thus giving Babylonia control over Assyria's centuries-old Hattian and Hurrian colonies in Asia Minor.

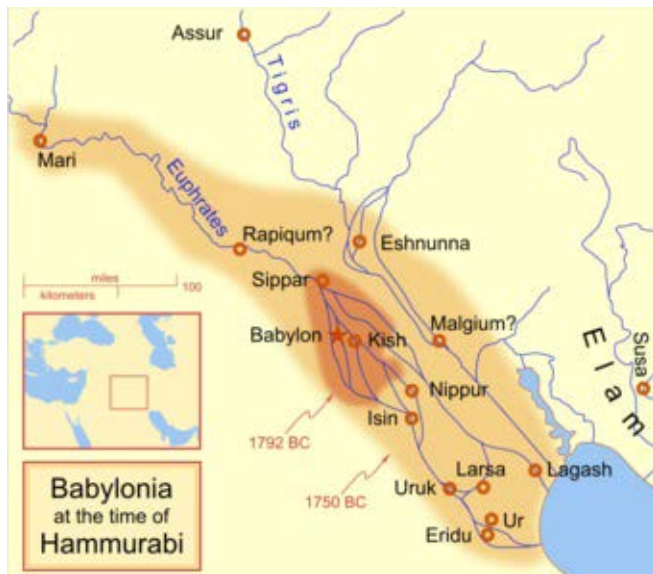


Figure 18 The extent of the Babylonian Empire at the start and end of Hammurabi's reign.

At the beginning of Hammurabi's reign, the Babylonian empire was concentrated in the area immediately surrounding Babylon, which was located between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in modern-day Hillah, Iraq, about 53 miles south of Baghdad. At the end of Hammurabi's reign, the Babylonian empire had extended south to the Persian Gulf and north along the Euphrates to Mari, which was located in modern-day Abu Kamal, Syria, near the Syria/Iraq border.

One of the most important works of this First Dynasty of Babylon was the compilation in about 1754 BCE of a code of laws, called the Code of Hammurabi, which echoed and improved upon the earlier written laws of Sumer, Akkad, and Assyria. It is one of the oldest deciphered writings of significant length in the world. The Code consists of 282 laws, with scaled punishments depending on social status, adjusting "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." Nearly one-half of the Code deals with matters of contract. A third of the code addresses issues concerning household and family relationships.

From before 3000 BC until the reign of Hammurabi, the major cultural and religious center of southern Mesopotamia had been the ancient city of Nippur, where the god Enlil reigned supreme. However, with the rise of Hammurabi, this honor was transferred to Babylon, and the god Marduk rose to supremacy (with the god Ashur remaining the dominant deity in Assyria). The city of Babylon became known as a "holy city," where any legitimate ruler of southern Mesopotamia had to be crowned. Hammurabi turned what had previously been a minor administrative town into a major city, increasing its size and population dramatically, and conducting a number of impressive architectural works.

The Decline of the First Babylonian Dynasty

Despite Hammurabi's various military successes, southern Mesopotamia had no natural, defensible boundaries, which made it vulnerable to attack. After the death of Hammurabi, his empire began to disintegrate rapidly. Under his successor Samsu-iluna (1749-1712 BCE), the far south of Mesopotamia was lost to a native Akkadian king, called Ilim-ma-ili, and became the Sealand Dynasty; it remained free of Babylon for the next 272 years.

Both the Babylonians and their Amorite rulers were driven from Assyria to the north by an Assyrian- Akkadian governor named Puzur-Sin, c. 1740 BCE. Amorite rule survived in a much-reduced Babylon, Samsu-iluna's successor, Abi-Eshuh, made a vain attempt to recapture the Sealand Dynasty for Babylon, but met defeat at the hands of king Damqi-ilishu II. By the end of his reign, Babylonia had shrunk to the small and relatively weak nation it had been upon its foundation.

2.3.2: Hammurabi's Code

The Code of Hammurabi was a collection of 282 laws, written in c. 1754 BCE in Babylon, which focused on contracts and family relationships, featuring a presumption of innocence and the presentation of evidence.

Learning Objective

- Describe the significance of Hammurabi's code

Key Points

- The Code of Hammurabi is one of the oldest deciphered writings of length in the world (written c. 1754 BCE), and features a code of law from ancient Babylon in Mesopotamia.
- The Code consisted of 282 laws, with punishments that varied based on social status (slaves, free men, and property owners).
- Some have seen the Code as an early form of constitutional government, as an early form of the presumption of innocence, and as the ability to present evidence in one's case.
- Major laws covered in the Code include slander, trade, slavery, the duties of workers, theft, liability, and divorce. Nearly half of the code focused on contracts,

and a third on household relationships.

- There were three social classes: the *amelu* (the elite), the *mushkenu* (free men) and *ardu* (slave).
- Women had limited rights, and were mostly based around marriage contracts and divorce rights.
- A stone stele featuring the Code was discovered in 1901, and is currently housed in the Louvre.

Key Terms

- **Cuneiform** – Wedge-shaped characters used in the ancient writing systems of Mesopotamia, impressed on clay tablets.
- **Ardu** – In Babylon, a slave.
- **Mushkenu** – In Babylon, a free man who was probably landless.
- **Amelu** – In Babylon, an elite social class of people.
- **Stele** – A stone or wooden slab, generally taller than it is wide, erected as a monument.

The Code of Hammurabi is one of the oldest deciphered writings of length in the world, and features a code of law from ancient Babylon in Mesopotamia. Written in about 1754 BCE by the sixth king of Babylon, Hammurabi, the Code was written on stone stele and clay tablets. It consisted of 282 laws, with punishments that varied based on social status (slaves, free men, and property owners). It is most famous for the "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth" (*lex talionis*) form of punishment. Other forms of codes of law had been in existence in the region around this time, including the Code of Ur-Nammu, king of Ur (c. 2050 BCE), the Laws of Eshnunna (c. 1930 BCE) and the codex of Lipit-Ishtar of Isin (c. 1870 BCE).

The laws were arranged in groups, so that citizens could easily read what was required of them. Some have seen the Code as an early form of constitutional government, and as an early form of the presumption of innocence, and the ability to present evidence in one's case. Intent was often recognized and affected punishment, with neglect severely punished. Some of the provisions may have been codification of Hammurabi's decisions, for the purpose of self-glorification. Nevertheless, the Code was studied, copied, and used

as a model for legal reasoning for at least 1500 years after.

The prologue of the Code features Hammurabi stating that he wants "to make justice visible in the land, to destroy the wicked person and the evil-doer, that the strong might not injure the weak." Major laws covered in the Code include slander, trade, slavery, the duties of workers, theft, liability, and divorce. Nearly half of the code focused on contracts, such as wages to be paid, terms of transactions, and liability in case of property damage. A third of the code focused on household and family issues, including inheritance, divorce, paternity and sexual behavior. One section establishes that a judge who incorrectly decides an issue may be removed from his position permanently. A few sections address military service.

One of the most well-known sections of the Code was law #196: "If a man destroy the eye of another man, they shall destroy his eye. If one break a man's bone, they shall break his bone. If one destroy the eye of a freeman or break the bone of a freeman he shall pay one gold mina. If one destroy the eye of a man's slave or break a bone of a man's slave he shall pay one-half his price."

The Social Classes

Under Hammurabi's reign, there were three social classes. The amelu was originally an elite person with full civil rights, whose birth, marriage and death were recorded. Although he had certain privileges, he also was liable for harsher punishment and higher fines. The king and his court, high officials, professionals and craftsmen belonged to this group. The mushkenu was a free man who may have been landless. He was required to accept monetary compensation, paid smaller fines and lived in a separate section of the city. The ardu was a slave whose master paid for his upkeep, but also took his compensation. Ardu could own property and other slaves, and could purchase his own freedom.



Figure 19 This basalt stele has the Code of Hammurabi inscribed in cuneiform script in the Akkadian language.

Women's Rights

Women entered into marriage through a contract arranged by her family. She came with a

dowry, and the gifts given by the groom to the bride also came with her. Divorce was up to the husband, but after divorce he then had to restore the dowry and provide her with an income, and any children came under the woman's custody. However, if the woman was considered a "bad wife" she might be sent away, or made a slave in the husband's house. If a wife brought action against her husband for cruelty and neglect, she could have a legal separation if the case was proved. Otherwise, she might be drowned as punishment. Adultery was punished with drowning of both parties, unless a husband was willing to pardon his wife.

Discovery of the Code

Archaeologists, including Egyptologist Gustave Jequier, discovered the code in 1901 at the ancient site of Susa in Khuzestan; a translation was published in 1902 by Jean-Vincent Scheil. A basalt stele containing the code in cuneiform script inscribed in the Akkadian language is currently on display in the Louvre, in Paris, France. Replicas are located at other museums throughout the world.

2.3.3: Babylonian Culture

Hallmarks of Babylonian culture include mudbrick architecture, extensive astronomical records and logs, diagnostic medical handbooks, and translations of Sumerian literature.

Learning Objective

- Evaluate the extent and influence of Babylonian culture

Key Points

- Babylonian temples were massive structures of crude brick, supported by buttresses. Such uses of brick led to the early development of the pilaster and column, and of frescoes and enameled tiles. Certain pieces of Babylonian art featured crude three-dimensional statues, and gem-cutting was considered a high-perfection art.
- The Babylonians produced extensive compendiums of astronomical records containing catalogues of stars and constellations, as well as schemes for calculating various astronomical coordinates and phenomena.
- Medicinally, the Babylonians introduced basic medical processes, such as

diagnosis and prognosis, and also catalogued a variety of illnesses with their symptoms.

- Both Babylonian men and women learned to read and write, and much of Babylonian literature is translated from ancient Sumerian texts, such as the Epic of Gilgamesh.

Key Terms

- **Epic of Gilgamesh** – One of the most famous Babylonian works, a twelve-book saga translated from the original Sumerian.
- **Pilaster** – An architectural element in classical architecture used to give the appearance of a supporting column and to articulate an extent of wall, with only an ornamental function.
- **Etiology** – Causation. In medicine, cause or origin of disease or condition.
- **Mudbrick** – A brick mixture of loam, mud, sand, and water mixed with a binding material, such as rice husks or straw.
- **Enūma Anu Enlil** – A series of cuneiform tablets containing centuries of Babylonian observations of celestial phenomena.
- **Diagnostic Handbook** – The most extensive Babylonian medical text, written by Esagil-kin-apli of Borsippa.

Art and Architecture

In Babylonia, an abundance of clay and lack of stone led to greater use of mudbrick.

Babylonian temples were thus massive structures of crude brick, supported by buttresses.

The use of brick led to the early development of the pilaster and column, and of frescoes and enameled tiles. The walls were brilliantly colored, and sometimes plated with zinc or gold, as well as with tiles. Painted terracotta cones for torches were also embedded in the plaster. In Babylonia, in place of the bas-relief, there was a preponderance of three-dimensional figures—the earliest examples being the Statues of Gudea—that were realistic, if also somewhat clumsy. The paucity of stone in Babylonia made every pebble a commodity and led to a high perfection in the art of gem-cutting.

Astronomy

During the 8th and 7th centuries BCE, Babylonian astronomers developed a new empirical

approach to astronomy. They began studying philosophy dealing with the ideal nature of the universe and began employing an internal logic within their predictive planetary systems. This was an important contribution to astronomy and the philosophy of science, and some scholars have thus referred to this new approach as the first scientific revolution. Tablets dating back to the Old Babylonian period document the application of mathematics to variations in the length of daylight over a solar year. Centuries of Babylonian observations of celestial phenomena are recorded in a series of cuneiform tablets known as the "Enūma Anu Enlil." In fact, the oldest significant astronomical text known to mankind is Tablet 63 of the Enūma Anu Enlil, the Venus tablet of Ammi-saduqa, which lists the first and last visible risings of Venus over a period of about 21 years. This record is the earliest evidence that planets were recognized as periodic phenomena. The oldest rectangular astrolabe dates back to Babylonia c. 1100 BCE. The MUL.APIN contains catalogues of stars and constellations as well as schemes for predicting heliacal risings and the settings of the planets, as well as lengths of daylight measured by a water-clock, gnomon, shadows, and intercalations. The Babylonian GU text arranges stars in "strings" that lie along declination circles (thus measuring right-ascensions or time-intervals), and also employs the stars of the zenith, which are also separated by given right-ascensional differences.

Medicine

The oldest Babylonian texts on medicine date back to the First Babylonian Dynasty in the first half of the 2nd millennium BCE. The most extensive Babylonian medical text, however, is the Diagnostic Handbook written by the ummânū, or chief scholar, Esagil-kin-apli of Borsippa.

The Babylonians introduced the concepts of diagnosis, prognosis, physical examination, and prescriptions. The Diagnostic Handbook additionally introduced the methods of therapy and etiology outlining the use of empiricism, logic, and rationality in diagnosis, prognosis and treatment. For example, the text contains a list of medical symptoms and often detailed empirical observations along with logical rules used in combining observed symptoms on the body of a patient with its diagnosis and prognosis. In particular, Esagil-kin-apli discovered a variety of illnesses and diseases and described their symptoms in his Diagnostic Handbook, including those of many varieties of epilepsy and related ailments.

Literature

Libraries existed in most towns and temples. Women as well as men learned to read and write, and had knowledge of the extinct Sumerian language, along with a complicated and extensive syllabary.

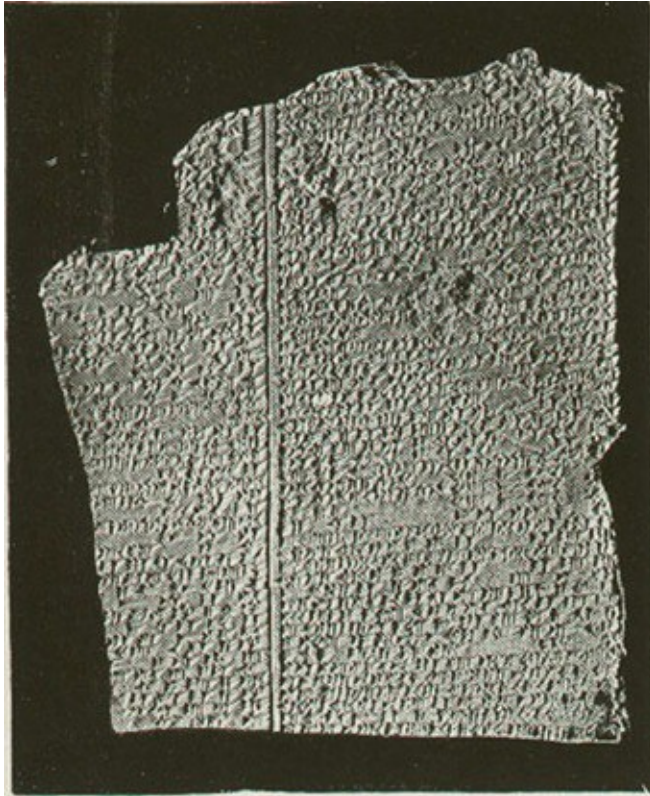


Figure 20 The Deluge tablet of the Gilgamesh epic in Akkadian.

A considerable amount of Babylonian literature was translated from Sumerian originals, and the language of religion and law long continued to be written in the old agglutinative language of Sumer.

Vocabularies, grammars, and interlinear translations were compiled for the use of students, as well as commentaries on the older texts and explanations of obscure words and phrases. The characters of the syllabary were organized and named, and elaborate lists of them were drawn up.

There are many Babylonian literary works whose titles have come down to us. One

of the most famous of these was the Epic of Gilgamesh, in twelve books, translated from the original Sumerian by a certain Sin-liqi-unninni, and arranged upon an astronomical principle. Each division contains the story of a single adventure in the career of King Gilgamesh. The whole story is a composite product, and it is probable that some of the stories are artificially attached to the central figure.

Philosophy

The origins of Babylonian philosophy can be traced back to early Mesopotamian wisdom literature, which embodied certain philosophies of life, particularly ethics, in the forms of dialectic, dialogs, epic poetry, folklore, hymns, lyrics, prose, and proverbs. Babylonian reasoning and rationality developed beyond empirical observation. It is possible that Babylonian philosophy had an influence on Greek philosophy, particularly Hellenistic philosophy. The Babylonian text Dialogue of Pessimism contains similarities to the

agonistic thought of the sophists, the Heraclitean doctrine of contrasts, and the dialogs of Plato, as well as a precursor to the maieutic Socratic method of Socrates.

Neo-Babylonian Culture

The resurgence of Babylonian culture in the 7th and 6th century BCE resulted in a number of developments. In astronomy, a new approach was developed, based on the philosophy of the ideal nature of the early universe, and an internal logic within their predictive planetary systems. Some scholars have called this the first scientific revolution, and it was later adopted by Greek astronomers. The Babylonian astronomer Seleucus of Seleucia (b. 190 BCE) supported a heliocentric model of planetary motion. In mathematics, the Babylonians devised the base 60 numeral system, determined the square root of two correctly to seven places, and demonstrated knowledge of the Pythagorean Theorem before Pythagoras.

2.3.4: Nebuchadnezzar and the Fall of Babylon

The Kassite Dynasty ruled Babylonia following the fall of Hammurabi and was succeeded by the Second Dynasty of Isin, during which time the Babylonians experienced military success and cultural upheavals under Nebuchadnezzar.

Learning Objective

- Describe the key characteristics of the Second Dynasty of Isin

Key Points

- Following the collapse of the First Babylonian Dynasty under Hammurabi, the Babylonian Empire entered a period of relatively weakened rule under the Kassites for 576 years. The Kassite Dynasty eventually fell itself due to the loss of territory and military weakness.
- The Kassites were succeeded by the Elamites, who themselves were conquered by Marduk-kabit-ahheshu, the founder of the Second Dynasty of Isin.
- Nebuchadnezzar I was the most famous ruler of the Second Dynasty of Isin. He enjoyed military successes for the first part of his career, then turned to peaceful building projects in his later years.
- The Babylonian Empire suffered major blows to its power when Nebuchadnezzar's

sons lost a series of wars with Assyria, and their successors effectively became vassals of the Assyrian king. Babylonia descended into a period of chaos in 1026 BCE.

Key Terms

- **Assyrian Empire** – A major Semitic empire of the Ancient Near East which existed as an independent state for a period of approximately nineteen centuries.
- **Nebuchadnezzar I** – The most famous ruler of the Second Dynasty of Isin, who sacked the Elamite capital of Susa and devoted himself to peaceful building projects after securing Babylonia's borders.
- **Elamites** – An ancient civilization centered in the far west and southwest of modern-day Iran.
- **Kassite Dynasty** – An ancient Near Eastern people who controlled Babylonia for nearly 600 years after the fall of the First Babylonian Dynasty.
- **Marduk-kabit-ahheshu** – Over thrower of the Elamites and the founder of the Second Dynasty of Isin.
- **Kudurru** – A type of stone document used as boundary stones and as records of land grants to vassals by the Kassites in ancient Babylonia.

The Fall of the Kassite Dynasty and the Rise of the Second Dynasty of Isin

Following the collapse of the First Babylonian Dynasty under Hammurabi, the Babylonian Empire entered a period of relatively weakened rule under the Kassites for 576 years—the longest dynasty in Babylonian history. The Kassite Dynasty eventually fell due to the loss of territory and military weakness, which resulted in the evident reduction in literacy and culture. In 1157 BCE, Babylon was conquered by Shutruk-Nahhunte of Elam.

The Elamites did not remain in control of Babylonia long, and Marduk-kabit-ahheshu (1155-1139 BCE) established the Second Dynasty of Isin. This dynasty was the very first native Akkadian-speaking south Mesopotamian dynasty to rule Babylon, and was to remain in power for some 125 years. The new king successfully drove out the Elamites and prevented any possible Kassite revival. Later in his reign, he went to war with Assyria and had some initial success before suffering defeat at the hands of the Assyrian king

Ashur-Dan I. He was succeeded by his son Itti-Marduk-balatu in 1138 BCE, who was followed a year later by Ninurta-nadin-shumi in 1137 BCE.

The Reign of Nebuchadnezzar I and His Sons

Nebuchadnezzar I (1124-1103 BCE) was the most famous ruler of the Second Dynasty of Isin. He not only fought and defeated the Elamites and drove them from Babylonian territory but invaded Elam itself, sacked the Elamite capital Susa, and recovered the sacred statue of Marduk that had been carried off from Babylon. In the later years of his reign, he devoted himself to peaceful building projects and securing Babylonia's borders. His construction activities are memorialized in building inscriptions of the Ekituš-ḫegal-tila, the temple of Adad in Babylon, and on bricks from the temple of Enlil in Nippur. A late Babylonian inventory lists his donations of gold vessels in Ur. The earliest of three extant economic texts is dated to Nebuchadnezzar's eighth year; in addition to two kudurrus and a stone memorial tablet, they form the only existing commercial records. These artifacts evidence the dynasty's power as builders, craftsmen, and managers of the business of the empire.



Figure 21 This detail depicts Nebuchadnezzar granting Marduk freedom from taxation.

Nebuchadnezzar was succeeded by his two sons, firstly Enlil-nadin-apli (1103-1100 BCE), who lost territory to Assyria, and then Marduk-nadin-ahhe (1098-1081 BCE), who also went to war with Assyria. Some initial success in these conflicts gave way to catastrophic defeat at the hands of Tiglath-pileser I, who annexed huge swathes of Babylonian territory, thereby further expanding the Assyrian Empire. Following this military defeat, a

terrible famine gripped Babylon, which invited attacks from Semitic Aramean tribes from the west.

In 1072 BCE, King Marduk-shapik-zeri signed a peace treaty with Ashur-bel-kala of Assyria. His successor, Kadašman-Buriaš, however, did not maintain his predecessor's

peaceful intentions, and his actions prompted the Assyrian king to invade Babylonia and place his own man on the throne. Assyrian domination continued until c. 1050 BCE, with the two reigning Babylonian kings regarded as vassals of Assyria. Assyria descended into a period of civil war after 1050 BCE, which allowed Babylonia to once more largely free itself from the Assyrian yoke for a few decades.

However, Babylonia soon began to suffer repeated incursions from Semitic nomadic peoples migrating from the west, and large swathes of Babylonia were appropriated and occupied by these newly arrived Arameans, Chaldeans, and Suteans. Starting in 1026 and lasting till 911 BCE, Babylonia descended into a period of chaos.

Attributions

- Babylon
 - "Mari, Syria." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mari,_Syria. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Babylon." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babylon>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Code of Hammurabi." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Code_of_Hammurabi. Wikipedia CC BY- SA 3.0.
 - "Babylonia." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babylonia>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Babylonia." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babylonia>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- Hammurabi's Code
 - "Code of Hammurabi." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Code_of_Hammurabi. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Babylonian Law." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babylonian_law. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Hammurabi's Code: An Eye for an Eye." <http://www.ushistory.org/civ/4c.asp>. Ancient Civilizations CC BY 4.0.
 - "220px-Code-de-Hammurabi-1.jpg." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Code-de-Hammurabi-1.jpg>. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
- Babylonian Culture
 - "Babylonia." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babylonia>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "etiology." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/etiology>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Epic of Gilgamesh." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epic_of_gilgamesh.

Wikipedia CC BY-SA.

- "pilaster." <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/pilaster>. Wiktionary CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Epic of Gilgamesh." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epic_of_gilgamesh.

Wikipedia Public domain.

- Nebuchadnezzar and the Fall of Babylon

- "Nebuchadnezzar I." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nebuchadnezzar_I.

Wikipedia CC BY-SA.

- "Babylonia." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babylonia>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
- "Nebuchadnezzar I." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nebuchadnezzar_I.

Wikipedia Public domain.

3: Early Civilizations

3.1: Ancient Societies on the Mediterranean

3.1.1: The Hittites

The Hittites were an ancient Anatolian people of the Bronze Age, who manufactured advanced iron goods, ruled through government officials with independent authority over various branches of government, and worshipped storm gods.

Learning Objective

- Describe the key characteristics of the Hittite Empire

Key Points

- The Hittite Empire was established at Hattusa in north-central Anatolia around 1600 BCE, and reached its height during the mid-14th century BCE under Suppiluliuma I.
- After c. 1180 BCE, the empire came to an end during the Bronze Age collapse and splintered into several independent "Neo-Hittite" city-states, some of which survived until the 8th century BCE.
- The Hittite language was a member of the Anatolian branch of the Indo-European language family.
- The Hittite military made successful use of chariots and advanced iron working technologies.
- After 1180 BCE, amid general turmoil in the Levant associated with the sudden arrival of the Sea Peoples, the kingdom disintegrated into several independent "Neo-Hittite" city-states.
- The head of the Hittite state was the king, but other officials exercised independent authority over various branches of the government.
- Storm gods featured prominently in the Hittite religion, which was heavily influenced

by Hattic, Mesopotamian, and Hurrian religions.

Key Terms

- **Indo-European language** – A member of a family of several hundred related languages and dialects that includes most major current languages of Europe, the Iranian plateau, the Indian subcontinent, and ancient Anatolia.
- **Hittite Empire** – An ancient Anatolian people who established an empire at Hattusa in north-central Anatolia around 1600 BCE. It reached its height during the mid-14th century BCE.
- **Tarhunt** – The Hurrian god of sky and storm who oversaw Hittite conflicts with foreign powers.
- **Cuneiform** – Wedge-shaped characters used in ancient Mesopotamian writings, typically on clay tablets.

The Hittites were an ancient Anatolian people who established an empire at Hattusa in north-central Anatolia around 1600 BCE. The Hittite Empire reached its height during the mid-14th century BCE under Suppiluliuma I, when it encompassed an area that included most of Asia Minor as well as parts of the northern Levant and Upper Mesopotamia. After c. 1180 BCE, the empire came to an end during the Bronze Age collapse, and splintered into several independent "Neo-Hittite" city-states, some of which survived until the 8th century BCE.



Figure 22 The approximate extent of the maximum area of the Hittite rule (light green) and the Hittite rule c. 1350- 1300 BCE (green line).

The Hittite Empire included portions of modern-day Turkey, Syria, and Lebanon. At its peak, during the reign of Mursili II, the Hittite Empire stretched from Arzawa in the west to Mitanni in the east, many of the Kaskian territories to the north including Hayasa-Azzi in the far north-east, and on south into Canaan approximately as far as the southern border of Lebanon, incorporating all of

these territories within its domain.

The Hittite language was a member of the Anatolian branch of the Indo-European language family. They referred to their native land as Hatti. The conventional name "Hittites" is due to their initial identification with the Biblical Hittites, according to 19th century archaeology. The Hebrew Bible refers to "Hittites" in several passages, and links them to an eponymous ancestor Heth, a descendant of Ham through his son Canaan. The Hittites are thereby counted among the Canaanites. The Hittites are usually depicted as a people living among the Israelites—Abraham purchases the Patriarchal burial-plot from "Ephron HaChiti" (Ephron the Hittite), and Hittites serve as high military officers in David's army. In 2 Kings 7:6, they are depicted as a people with their own kingdoms.

Despite the use of Hatti as the core of their territory, the Hittites should be distinguished from the Hattians, an earlier people who inhabited the same region (until the beginning of the 2nd millennium BCE), and spoke a different language, possibly in the Northwest Caucasian language group known as Hattic.

The Hittite military made successful use of chariots. Although their civilization thrived during the Bronze Age, the Hittites were the forerunners of the Iron Age and were manufacturing iron artifacts from as early as the 14th century BCE. Correspondence with rulers from other empires reveal a foreign demand for iron goods.

After 1180 BCE, amid general turmoil in the Levant associated with the sudden arrival of the Sea Peoples, the kingdom disintegrated into several independent "Neo-Hittite" city-states. The history of the Hittite civilization is known mostly from cuneiform texts found in the area of their kingdom, and from diplomatic and commercial correspondence found in various archives in Egypt and the Middle East.

Culture:

Government

The head of the Hittite state was the king, followed by the heir-apparent. However, some officials exercised independent authority over various branches of the government. One of the most important of these posts was that of the Gal Mesedi (Chief of the Royal Bodyguards). It was superseded by the rank of the Gal Gestin (Chief of the Wine Stewards), who, like the Gal Mesedi, was generally a member of the royal family. The

kingdom's bureaucracy was headed by the Gal Dubsar (Chief of the Scribes).

Religion

Hittite religion and mythology were heavily influenced by their Hattic, Mesopotamian, and Hurrian counterparts. In earlier times, Indo-European elements may still be clearly discerned.

"Storm gods" were prominent in the Hittite pantheon. Tarhunt was referred to as "The Conqueror," "The King of Kummiya," "King of Heaven," and "Lord of the land of Hatti." As the god of battle and victory, especially against foreign powers, he was chief among the gods and was depicted as a bearded man astride two mountains and bearing a club.

3.1.2: The Phoenicians

Known for their alphabet, the Phoenicians were an ancient Semitic maritime trading culture in the Mediterranean. They fell under both Persian and Hellenistic rule.

Learning Objective

- Describe key aspects of Phoenician culture

Key Points

- Phoenicia was an ancient Semitic maritime trading culture situated on the western, coastal part of the Fertile Crescent and centered on the coastline of modern Lebanon and Tartus Governorate in Syria from 1550 to 300 BCE.
- The Phoenicians used the galley, a human-powered sailing vessel, and are credited with the invention of the bireme.
- Each Phoenician city-state was a politically independent unit. City-states often came into conflict with others of its kind, or formed leagues and alliances.
- A league of independent city-state ports, with others on the islands and along other coasts of the Mediterranean Sea, was ideally suited for trade between the Levant area (which was rich in natural resources) and the rest of the ancient world.
- Cyrus the Great of Persia conquered Phoenicia in 539 BCE, and divided Phoenicia into four vassal kingdoms: Sidon, Tyre, Arwad, and Byblos.
- Alexander the Great conquered Phoenicia beginning with Tyre in 332 BCE. The rise of Hellenistic Greece gradually ousted the remnants of Phoenicia's former

dominance over the Eastern Mediterranean trade routes.

Key Terms

- **City-state** – An independent or autonomous entity, not administered as a part of another local government, whose territory consists of a city and possibly its surrounding territory.
- **Bireme** – An ancient oared warship (galley) with two decks of oars, probably invented by the Phoenicians.
- **Phoenicia** – An ancient Semitic maritime trading culture situated on the western, coastal part of the Fertile Crescent.
- **Cyrus the Great** – Also known as Cyrus II of Persia, Cyrus the Elder. Founder of the Achaemenid Empire.
- **Alexander the Great** – Also known as Alexander III of Macedon. His military was extremely successful, and he created one of the largest empires in history.

Phoenicia was an ancient Semitic civilization situated on the western, coastal part of the Fertile Crescent near modern-day Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, Palestine, and Syria. All major Phoenician cities were on the coastline of the Mediterranean. It was an enterprising maritime trading culture that spread across the Mediterranean from 1550 BCE to 300 BCE. The Phoenicians used the galley, a man-powered sailing vessel, and are credited with the invention of the bireme oared ship. They were famed in Classical Greece and Rome as "traders in purple," which refers to their monopoly on the precious purple dye of the Murex snail, used for royal clothing, among other things.



Figure 23 Assyrian warship (probably built by Phoenicians) with two rows of oars, relief from Nineveh, c. 700 BCE.

Phoenician became one of the most widely used writing systems. It was spread by Phoenician merchants across the Mediterranean world, where it evolved and was assimilated by many other cultures. The Aramaic alphabet, a modified form of Phoenician, was the ancestor of modern Arabic

script, while Hebrew script is a stylistic variant of the Aramaic script. The Greek alphabet (and by extension its descendants, such as the Latin, the Cyrillic, and the Coptic) was a direct successor of Phoenician, though certain letter values were changed to represent vowels.

Phoenicians are widely thought to have originated from the earlier Canaanite inhabitants of the region. Although Egyptian seafaring expeditions had already been made to Byblos to bring back "cedars of Lebanon" as early as the 3rd millennium BCE, continuous contact only occurred in the Egyptian New Empire period.

It is important to note that Phoenicia is a Classical Greek term used to refer to the region of the major Canaanite port towns, and does not correspond exactly to a cultural identity that would have been recognized by the Phoenicians themselves. It is uncertain to what extent the Phoenicians viewed themselves as a single ethnicity and nationality. Their civilization was organized in city-states, similar to that of ancient Greece. However, in terms of archaeology, language, life style and religion, there is little to set the Phoenicians apart as markedly different from other Semitic cultures of Canaan. As Canaanites, they were unique in their remarkable seafaring achievements.

Each Phoenician city-state was a politically independent unit. City-states often came into conflict with one another, with the result that one may dominate another. City-states were also inclined to collaborate in leagues and alliances. Though ancient boundaries of city-centered cultures fluctuated, the city of Tyre held the southernmost border of Phoenician territory.

Rise and Decline

The high point of Phoenician culture and sea power is usually placed c. 1200-800 BCE, though many of the most important Phoenician settlements had been established long before this period. Archeology has identified cultural elements of the Phoenician zenith as early as the 3rd millennium BCE. The league of independent city-state ports, with others on the islands and along other coasts of the Mediterranean Sea, was ideally suited for trade between the Levant area (which was rich in natural resources) and the rest of the ancient world. During the early Iron Age, around 1200 BCE, Sea Peoples appeared in the area from the north, which weakened and destroyed the Egyptians and Hittites,

respectively. In the resulting power vacuum, a number of Phoenician cities rose as significant maritime powers.

These societies rested on three power-bases: the king; the temple and its priests; and the councils of elders. Byblos first became the predominant center from where the Phoenicians dominated the Mediterranean and Erythraean (Red) Sea routes. It was here that the first inscription in the Phoenician alphabet was found, on the sarcophagus of Ahiiram (c. 1200 BCE). Tyre rose to power several hundred years later. One of its kings, the priest Ithobaal (887–856 BCE), ruled Phoenicia as far north as Beirut and Cyprus. Carthage was founded in 814 BCE, under Pygmalion of Tyre (820–774 BCE). The collection of city-states

constituting Phoenicia came to be characterized by outsiders and the Phoenicians as Sidonia or Tyria. Phoenicians and Canaanites alike were called Sidonians or Tyrians, as one Phoenician city came to prominence after another.



Figure 24 A Phoenician sarcophagus at the burial grounds of Antarados, northern Lebanon, 480-450 BCE. Made from Greek marble.

Persian Rule

Cyrus the Great of Persia conquered Phoenicia in 539 BCE. The Persians divided Phoenicia into four vassal kingdoms: Sidon, Tyre, Arwad, and Byblos. Though these vassal kingdoms prospered and furnished fleets for the Persian kings, Phoenician influence declined after this period. It is likely that much of the Phoenician population migrated to Carthage and other colonies following the Persian conquest. In 350 or 345 BCE, a rebellion in Sidon was crushed by Artaxerxes III.

Hellenistic Rule

Alexander the Great took Tyre in 332 BCE after the Siege of Tyre, and kept the existing

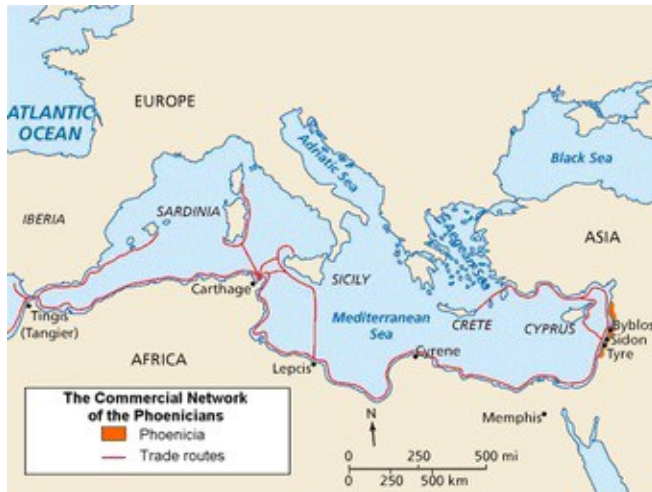


Figure 25 Map of Phoenicia and its trade routes.

king in power. He gained control of the other Phoenician cities peacefully, and the rise of Hellenistic Greece gradually ousted the remnants of Phoenicia's former dominance over the Eastern Mediterranean trade routes.

Phoenician culture disappeared entirely in the motherland. Carthage continued to flourish in North Africa. It oversaw the mining of iron and precious metals from

Iberia, and used its considerable naval power and mercenary armies to protect commercial interests. It was finally destroyed by Rome in 146 BC, at the end of the Punic Wars.

3.1.3: The Minoans

The Minoans were an Aegean Bronze Age civilization on the island of Crete that flourished between 2800-1450 BCE. They left behind extensive material culture showing the extent of their handicraft and influence upon Mycenaean culture.

Learning Objective

- Evaluate the impact of Minoan culture on other cultures and empires of the time

Key Points

- The Minoan civilization was an Aegean Bronze Age civilization that arose on the island of Crete, and flourished from approximately the 27th century to the 15th century BCE.
- The term "Minoan" was coined after the mythic "king" Minos, who was associated in Greek myth with the labyrinth identified with the site at Knossos.
- The Bronze Age allowed upper Minoan classes to practice leadership activities and to expand their influence, eventually replacing the original hierarchies of the local elites with monarchist power structures.

- The apex of Minoan civilization occurred during a period of large building projects, as palaces were rebuilt and settlements sprung up throughout Crete.
- Evidence of the influence of Minoan civilization outside Crete can be seen in Minoan handicraft on the Greek mainland, likely the result of a connection between Mycenaean and Minoan trade networks. The Minoans were also connected to Egypt and the Canaanite civilization.
- The Minoan civilization declined due to natural catastrophe, but the Dynasty of Knossos was able to spread its influence over Crete until it was overrun by the Mycenaean Greeks.
- Minoan culture is known best for its pottery and handiwork, and its religion was based primarily on the worship of female goddesses.

Key Terms

- **Linear B** – A syllabic script that was used for writing Mycenaean Greek—the earliest attested form of Greek.
- **Minoan civilization** – An Aegean Bronze Age civilization that arose on the island of Crete and flourished from approximately the 27th century to the 15th century BCE.
- **Knossos** – A syllabic script that was used for writing Mycenaean Greek, the earliest attested form of Greek.
- **Neopalatial period** – The period of the new or second palaces of Minoan Crete, corresponding roughly with 17th and 16th centuries BCE.
- **Linear A** – The primary script used in palace and religious writings of the Minoan civilization, one of two currently undeciphered writing systems used in ancient Crete.

The Minoan civilization was an Aegean Bronze Age civilization that arose on the island of Crete, and flourished from approximately the 27th century to the 15th century BCE.

The early inhabitants of Crete settled as early as 128,000 BCE, during the Middle Paleolithic Age. It was not until 5000 BCE that the first signs of advanced agriculture appeared, marking the beginning of civilization. The term "Minoan" was coined by Arthur Evans after the mythic "king" Minos. Minos was associated in Greek myth with the labyrinth, which is identified with the site at Knossos.

The Bronze Age began in Crete around 2700 BCE, when several localities on the island developed into centers of commerce and handwork. This development enabled the upper classes to continuously practice leadership activities and to expand their influence. It is likely that the original hierarchies of the local elites were replaced by monarchist power structures—a precondition for the creation of the great palaces.



Figure 26 A map of Minoan Crete.

Around 1700 BCE, there was a large disturbance in Crete, possibly an earthquake or an invasion from Anatolia. The palaces at Knossos, Phaistos, Malia, and Kato Zakros were destroyed. But with the start of the Neopalatial period (the 17th and 16th centuries BCE), population increased again, palaces were rebuilt on a larger scale, and new settlements sprung up all over the island. This period represents the apex of the Minoan civilization.



Figure 27 Restored North Entrance of the Knossos palace complex, with the charging bull fresco.

The influence of the Minoan civilization outside Crete has been seen in the evidence of valuable Minoan handicraft items on the Greek mainland. It is likely that the ruling house of Mycena was connected to the Minoan trade network. After c. 1700 BCE, the material culture on the Greek mainland achieved a new level due to Minoan influence. Connections between Egypt and Crete are also prominent. Minoan ceramics are found in

Egyptian cities, and the Minoans imported several items from Egypt, especially papyrus, as well as architectural and artistic ideas. The Egyptian hieroglyphs served as a model for Minoan pictographic writing, from which the famous Linear A and Linear B writing systems later developed. There has also been evidence of Minoan influence among Canaanite artifacts.

The Minoan culture began to decline c. 1450 BCE, following an earthquake, the eruption of the Thera volcano, or another possible natural catastrophe. Several important palaces in locations such as Mallia, Tylissos, Phaistos, Hagia Triade, as well as the living quarters of Knossos were destroyed, but the palace in Knossos seems to have remained largely intact. The preservation of this palace resulted in the Dynasty in Knossos spreading its influence over large parts of Crete until it was overrun by Mycenaean Greeks.

Society and Culture:

Pottery

The best surviving examples of Minoan art are its pottery and palace architecture with frescos that include landscapes, stone carvings, and intricately carved seal stones. Ceramics from the Early Minoan period are characterized by linear patterns of spirals, triangles, curved lines, crosses, and fishbone motifs. In the Middle Minoan period, naturalistic designs such as fish, squid, birds, and lilies were common. In the Late Minoan period, flowers and animals were still the most characteristic, but the variability had increased. The "palace style" of the region around Knossos is characterized by a strong geometric simplification of naturalistic shapes and monochromatic paintings. The similarities between Late Minoan and Mycenaean art are notable. Frescoes were the main form of art during the period of Late Minoan culture.

Religion

The Minoans seem to have worshiped primarily goddesses, and can be described as a "matriarchal religion." Although there is some evidence of male gods, depictions of Minoan goddesses vastly outnumber depictions of anything that could be considered a Minoan god. While some of these depictions of women are speculated to be images of worshippers and priestesses officiating at religious ceremonies, as opposed to the deity, several goddesses appear to be portrayed. These include a mother goddess of fertility, a mistress of the animals, a protectress of cities, the household, the harvest, and the underworld, to name a few. The goddesses are often depicted with serpents, birds, or poppies, and are often shown with a figure of an animal upon her head.

Attributions

- The Hittites

- "Hittites." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hittites>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
- "Hittites." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Map_Hittite_rule_en.svg. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- The Phoenicians
 - "Phonician Alphabet." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phoenician_alphabet. Wikipedia CC BY- SA 3.0.
 - "Phoenicians." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phoenicians>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "City-state." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/city-state>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Alexander the Great." http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Alexander_the_Great. Wiktionary CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Phonecian Trade." <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/9c/PhoenicianTrade.png>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Phoenicia." <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/88/AssyrianWarship.jpg/640px-AssyrianWarship.jpg>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Phoenicians." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Antarados_sarkophagus_face.JPG. Wikipedia Public domain.
- The Minoans
 - "Minoan Civilization." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minoan_civilization. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Minoans." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minoans>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Linear A." http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Linear_A. Wiktionary CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Minoan Crete." http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/ff/Map_Minoan_Crete-en.svg/640px-Map_Minoan_Crete-en.svg.png. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Knossos." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knossos%23mediaviewer/File:Knossos_-_North_Portico_02.jpg. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

3.2: Ancient Africa

3.2.1: Sao

The Sao lived in modern-day Cameroon and Chad from the 6th century BCE to the 16th century CE.

Learning Objective

- Identify where and when the Sao lived

Key Points

- The Sao civilization flourished in Middle Africa from the 6th century BCE to as late as the 16th century CE. Due to a lack of written records, little is known about the Sao's culture or political organization.
- One theory of the origin of the Sao states that they descended from the Hyksos, who conquered Ancient Egypt and later moved south, from the Nile valley to mid-Africa, after fleeing invaders. The Sao were made up of several patrilineal clans who were united into a single polity with one language, race, and religion.
- It is unclear why the Sao declined, but it may have been due to conquest or assimilation.
- Today, several ethnic groups of northern Cameroon and southern Chad, particularly the Sara, claim to be descendants of the Sao.

Key Terms

- **Hyksos** – A people of mixed Semitic and Asian descent who invaded Egypt and settled in the Nile delta c. 1640 BCE. They were driven out of Egypt c. 1532 BCE.
- **Patrilineal** – Pertaining to descent through male lines.
- **Islamization** – The process of a society's shift toward the religion of Islam.

The Sao civilization flourished in Middle Africa from the 6th century BCE to as late as the 16th century CE. They lived by the Chari River, south of Lake Chad, in parts of modern-day Cameroon and Chad.

For more than 2,000 years, the Chadian Basin has been inhabited by agricultural and



Figure 28 Chari River Region including Lake Chad, Cameroon, and environs.

sedentary people. The region became a crossroads of civilizations. The earliest of these were the legendary Sao, known today only from artifacts and oral histories. They left no written records and are known only through archaeological finds and the oral history of their successors in the territory. Unfortunately, little is known about the Sao's culture or political organization. One theory of the origin of the Sao states that they descended from the Hyksos, who conquered Ancient Egypt and later moved south, from the Nile valley to mid-Africa, after fleeing invaders.

Sao artifacts show that they were skilled workers in bronze, copper, and iron. They made bronze sculptures and terra cotta statues of human and animal figures, funerary urns, and highly decorated pottery. The Sao were made up of several patrilineal clans who were united into a single polity with one language, race, and religion.

The Sao's demise may have come about due to conquest, Islamization, or a combination of the two. Traditional tales say that the Sao west of Lake Chad fell to "Yemenites" from the east. If true, the newcomers may have been Arab Bedouin



Figure 29 A Sao sculpture from Chad

or Sayfuwa raiders coming from the east, who moved into the region in the 14th century

CE. Although some scholars estimate that the Sao civilization south of Lake Chad lasted until the 14th or 15th century CE, the majority opinion is that it ceased to exist as a separate culture sometime in the 16th century CE.

The Sao fell to the Kanem Empire, the first and longest-lasting of the empires that developed in Chad's Sahelian strip by the end of the 1st millennium CE. The power of Kanem and its successors was based on control of the trans-Saharan trade routes that passed through the region.

Today, several ethnic groups of northern Cameroon and southern Chad, particularly the Sara, claim to be descendants of the Sao. The Sara are an ethnic group who reside in southern Chad and Central African Republic. They make up 27.7% of Chad's total population (year 1993 Census). Other ethnic groups in the Lake Chad basin area, including the Buduma, Gamergu, Kanembu, Kotoko and Musgum, also claim to be descended from the Sao.

3.2.2: Ancient Carthage

Ancient Carthage was a North African civilization that lasted from c. 650 BCE to 146 BCE.

Learning Objective

- Explain Carthage's culture and the Punic Wars

Key Points

- Ancient Carthage was the empire born of the Phoenician city-state Carthage.
- Carthage practiced highly advanced and productive agriculture and manufacturing.
- Carthage traded in almost every commodity wanted by the ancient world, including spices from Arabia, Africa, and India. It also participated in the slave trade.
- The military of Carthage was one of the largest military forces in the ancient world; its navy was its strongest force.
- The Punic Wars were fought with Rome from 265 BCE to 146 BCE. The main cause was the conflict of interest between the existing Carthaginian Empire and the expanding Roman Republic.
- The Third Punic War began in 149 BCE, and culminated in the defeat of Carthage.

- The Roman domination during the Punic Wars was the beginning of a rise in status that would last until the 5th century CE.

Key Terms

- **Phoenician** – A Semitic people inhabiting ancient Phoenicia and its colonies.
- **Polytheism** – The belief in, or worship of, more than one god.
- **Punic Wars** – A set of three wars between Carthage and Rome that culminated in the fall of Carthage.

Ancient Carthage was a North African, Phoenician civilization that lasted from c. 650 BCE to 146 BCE. They were defeated by the Romans in 146 BCE. Carthage eventually extended across northern Africa and into the south of modern-day Spain.



Figure 30 Ancient Carthage in 264 BCE.

Culture

Carthaginian religion was based on Phoenician religion (derived from the faiths of the Levant), a form of polytheism. Many of the gods the Carthaginians worshiped were localized, and are now known only under their local names.

Carthage produced finely embroidered silks, dyed textiles of cotton, linen, and wool, artistic and functional pottery, and perfumes. Its artisans worked expertly with ivory, glassware, and wood, as well as with metals and precious stones. It traded in salted Atlantic fish and fish sauce (garum), and brokered the products of almost every Mediterranean people. In addition to manufacturing, Carthage practiced highly advanced and productive agriculture, using iron ploughs, irrigation, and crop rotation.

Carthaginian commerce extended by sea throughout the Mediterranean, and perhaps into the Atlantic as far as the Canary Islands, and by land across the Sahara desert. According to Aristotle, the Carthaginians and others had treaties of commerce to regulate their exports and imports. The empire of Carthage depended heavily on its trade with cities of the Iberian peninsula, from which it obtained vast quantities of silver, lead, copper and—

most importantly—tin ore, which was essential for the manufacture of bronze objects by the civilizations of antiquity.

Carthaginian trade-relations with the Iberians (and the naval strength that enforced Carthage's monopoly on Iberian trade and that with tin-rich Britain), made it the sole significant broker of tin and maker of bronze in its day. Maintaining this monopoly was one of the major sources of power and prosperity for Carthage; Carthaginian merchants strove to keep the location of the tin mines secret. In addition to its role as the sole significant distributor of tin, Carthage's central location in the Mediterranean and control of the waters between Sicily and Tunisia allowed it to control the eastern peoples' supply of tin. Carthage was also the Mediterranean's largest producer of silver mined in Iberia and on the North African coast; after the tin monopoly, silver was one of its most profitable trades.

Carthage also sent caravans into the interior of Africa and Persia. It traded its manufactured and agricultural goods to the coastal and interior peoples of Africa for salt, gold, timber, ivory, ebony, apes, peacocks, skins, and hides. Its merchants invented the practice of sale by auction and used it to trade with the African tribes. In other ports, they tried to establish permanent warehouses, or sell their goods in open-air markets.

Carthage obtained amber from Scandinavia, and from the Celtiberians, Gauls, and Celts they got amber, tin, silver, and furs. Sardinia and Corsica produced gold and silver for Carthage, and Phoenician settlements on islands, such as Malta and the Balearic Islands, produced commodities that would be sent back to Carthage for large-scale distribution. The city supplied poorer civilizations with simple products (such as pottery, metallic objects, and ornamentations), often displacing the local manufacturing, and meanwhile brought its best works to wealthier civilizations (such as the Greeks and Etruscans). Carthage traded in almost every commodity wanted by the ancient world, including spices from Arabia, Africa and India. It also participated in the slave trade.

Military and Warfare

The military of Carthage was one of the largest military forces in the ancient world. Although Carthage's navy was always its main military force, the army acquired a key role in the spread of Carthaginian power over the native peoples of northern Africa and southern Iberian Peninsula, from the 6th century BC to the 3rd century BC. Carthage's

military also allowed it to expand into Sardinia and the Balearic Islands. This expansion transformed the military from a body of citizen-soldiers into a multinational force composed primarily of foreign mercenary units.

Ancient Carthage was almost constantly at war with the Greeks or the Romans. One set of wars was called the Punic Wars. They were fought with Rome from 265 BCE to 146 BCE. The main cause of the Punic Wars was the conflict of interest between the existing Carthaginian Empire and the expanding Roman Republic. The Romans were initially interested in expansion via Sicily (at that time a cultural melting pot), part of which lay under Carthaginian control. At the start of the first Punic War, Carthage was the dominant power of the Western Mediterranean, with an extensive maritime empire. Rome, meanwhile, was the rapidly ascending power in Italy, which still lacked the naval power of Carthage.

It was during the Second Punic War that the Carthaginian leader Hannibal launched his famous overland attack on Rome. By the end of the third war, which began in 149 BCE, many hundreds of thousands of soldiers from both sides had been lost, and Rome succeeded in conquering Carthage's empire. The Romans completely destroyed Carthage, and became the most powerful state in the Western Mediterranean. During this period, Rome emerged as the dominant Mediterranean power and one of the most powerful cities in classical antiquity. The Roman victories over Carthage in these wars gave Rome a preeminent status, a status it would retain until the 5th century CE.

Attributions

- Sao
 - "Lake Chad." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_Chad. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "The Chari River." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chari_River. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Chad." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chad>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Sara people." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sara_people. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Patrilineal." <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/patrilineal>. Wiktionary CC BY-SA

- 3.0.
- "Sao Civilization." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sao_civilization. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Figurines anthropomorphes Sao-Tchad." [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Figurines_anthropomorphes_Sao-Tchad_\(2\).jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Figurines_anthropomorphes_Sao-Tchad_(2).jpg). Wikimedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Chari River." <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/11/Charirivermap.png/480px-Charirivermap.png>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- Ancient Carthage
 - "Ancient Carthage." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Carthage. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Punic Wars." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Punic_Wars. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Ancient Carthage." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Carthage%23Culture. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Military of Ancient Carthage." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_of_ancient_Carthage. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Third Punic War." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_Punic_War. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "History of Carthage." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Carthage. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "CarthageMap." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Carthage%23mediaviewer/File:CarthageMap.png. Wikipedia Public domain.

3.3: The Ancient Andes

3.3.1: The Caral Civilization

The Caral civilization flourished in the Andean region between the 30th and 18th centuries BCE. This peaceful, urban center yielded several major discoveries, including a method of keeping records known as quipu.

Learning Objective

- Describe the significance of the Caral civilization of the Andes

Key Points

- The Caral civilization (also known as Caral-Supe) was part of the Norte Chico civilization complex, in what is now the Norte Chico region of north-central coastal Peru.
- The urban complex of Caral takes up more than 150 acres, and contains plazas, dwellings, and a 28- meters-high temple.
- Some scholars have suggested that Norte Chico was founded on seafood and maritime resources, rather than development of agricultural cereal and crop surpluses.
- One of the artifacts found at Caral is a knotted textile piece, called a quipu, which archaeologists believe was a method of keeping records.
- Evidence of warfare has not been found in Caral.
- A geoglyph of a human with long hair and open mouth was discovered in 2000 by Marco Machacuay and Rocio Aramburu just west of Caral.
- At its peak, approximately 3,000 people are believed to have lived in Caral.
- Norte Chico civilizations are pre-ceramic cultures of the pre-Columbian Late Archaic; they completely lacked ceramics, and apparently had almost no art. The most impressive achievement of these civilizations was its monumental architecture.

Key Terms

- **Caral civilization** – A complex pre-Columbian society that included as many as 30 major population centers, in what is now the Norte Chico region of north-central

Boundless URL: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/catalog/boundlesscourses>



Edited 2018: Tillamook Bay Community College

coastal Peru.

- **Geoglyph** – A large design produced on the ground, typically formed by rocks, stones, trees, gravel, or earth.
- **Quipu** – A knotted textile piece found at the Caral site, believed to be used for record-keeping.

The Caral civilization (also known as the Norte Chico civilization and as Caral-Supe) was a complex pre-Columbian society, located in what is now the Norte Chico region of north-central coastal Peru, near Supe, Barranca province, Peru (200 km north of Lima). Its location allowed it to take advantage of three rivers: the Fortaleza, the Pativilca, and the Supe. It has been established as the oldest known civilization in the Americas, and as one of the six sites where civilization separately originated in the ancient world.

The Caral flourished between the 30th and 18th centuries BCE. This complex society arose a millennium after Sumer in Mesopotamia, was contemporaneous with the Egyptian pyramids, and predated the Mesoamerican Olmec by nearly two millennia.



Figure 31 The remains of the Caral site in Peru

Caral was discovered by Paul Kosok in 1948, and further studied by archaeologist Ruth Shady. The urban complex of Caral takes up more than 150 acres, and holds plazas, dwellings, and a 28-meters-high temple. Its urban plan was used by Andean civilizations for the next four thousand years. One of the artifacts found

at Caral is a knotted textile piece named a quipu, which archaeologists believe was a method of keeping records. Other pieces found include flutes made of condor and pelican bones, and cornets made of deer and llama bones. Evidence of warfare has not been found. A geoglyph was discovered in 2000 by Marco Machacuay and Rocio Aramburu just west of Caral. The lines of the etching form a human face with long hair and an open mouth. At its peak, approximately 3,000 people are believed to have lived in Caral.

The Norte-Chico Region

In archaeological nomenclature, Norte Chico civilizations are pre-ceramic cultures of the pre-Columbian Late Archaic; they completely lacked ceramics and apparently had almost no art. The most impressive achievement of these civilizations was its monumental architecture, including large earthwork platform mounds and sunken circular plazas. Archaeological evidence suggests use of textile technology and, possibly, the worship of common god symbols, both of which recur in pre-Columbian



Figure 32 A view of the Caral temple

Andean cultures. Sophisticated government is assumed to have been required to manage the ancient Norte Chico. Questions remain over its organization, particularly the political influence of food resources. Some scholars have suggested that Norte Chico was founded on seafood and maritime resources, as opposed to the development of agricultural cereal and crop surpluses, which have been considered essential to the rise of other ancient civilizations.

3.3.2: The Chavín Civilization

The Chavín civilization, which lasted from 900-250 BCE in Peru, featured ingenious art and architecture, and had widespread influence on other local cultures.

Learning Objective

- Describe the significance of the Chavín civilization

Key Points

- The Chavín civilization developed in the northern Andean highlands of Peru between 900-250 BCE.
- There were three stages of development: Urabarriu (900-500 BCE), Chakinani (500-400 BCE), and Jarabarriu (400-250 BCE).
- Chavín had a small, powerful elite that was legitimized through a claim to divine authority.
- The chief example of Chavín architecture is the Chavín de Huántar temple, the design of which displays a complex and innovative adaptation to the highland

environment of Peru.

- The Chavín people showed advanced knowledge of acoustics, metallurgy, soldering, and temperature control. One of their main economic resources was ch'arki, or llama jerky.
- Chavín art represents the first widespread, recognizable artistic style in the Andes, and can be divided into two phases: the first phase corresponds to the construction of the "Old Temple" at Chavín de Huántar (c. 900-500 BCE); the second phase corresponds to the construction of Chavín de Huántar's "New Temple" (c. 500-200 BCE).
- Significant pieces of art include the Lanzón, Tello Obelisk, and tenon heads.

Key Terms

- **Camelids** – A mammal of the camel family (Camelidae).
- **Lanzón** – A stone stela found in the Chavín de Huántar temple.
- **Tello Obelisk** – A huge sculpted shaft depicting a Chavín creation myth.
- **Ch'arki** – Llama jerky.
- **Chavín civilization** – A civilization in the northern Andean highlands of Peru from 900-250 BCE, known for their construction of temples and their advancements in engineering and metallurgy.
- **Axis mundi** – A pivot point linking heaven, earth and the underworld.
- **Psychotropic drugs** – A chemical substance that changes brain function and results in alterations in perception, mood, or consciousness.
- **Urabarriu** – A stage of development in the Chavín civilization from 900-500 BCE.
- **Chakinani** – A stage of development in the Chavín civilization from 500-400 BCE.
- **Jarabarriu** – A stage of development in the Chavín civilization from 400-250 BCE.

The Chavín civilization developed in the northern Andean highlands of Peru between 900-250 BCE. Their influence extended to other civilizations along the coast. The Chavín civilization was located in the Mosna Valley, where the Mosna and Huachecsa rivers merge. It is now a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Stages of Development

Urabarriu lasted from 900-500 BCE, and just a few hundred people lived at Chavín de

Huántar. Ceramics were influenced by other cultures, and the people grew some maize and potatoes. Chakinani, from 500- 400 BCE, was a transitional time, when residents migrated to the ceremonial center. From 400-250 BCE, Jarabbariu saw a dramatic increase in population, with an urban/suburban pattern of settlement.



Figure 33 This map shows the location of the Chavín culture, as well as the areas the Chavín influenced.

Society

Chavín had a small, powerful elite that was legitimized through a claim to divine authority. These shamans were able to control and influence local citizens (probably partially through the use of psychotropic drugs), and were able to plan and carry out construction of temples and stone-walled galleries.

Architecture

The chief example of Chavín architecture is the Chavín de Huántar temple. The temple's design shows complex innovation to adapt to the highland

environment of Peru. To avoid flooding and the destruction of the temple during the rainy season, the Chavín people created a successful drainage system with canals under the temple structure; the rushing water during the rainy season sounds like one of the Chavín's sacred animals, the jaguar.

Economic Activity

The Chavín people showed advanced knowledge of acoustics, metallurgy, soldering, and temperature control to accommodate the rainy season. The Chavín were also skilled in developing refined goldwork, and used early techniques of melting metal and soldering.

The Chavín people domesticated camelids, such as llamas, which were used as pack animals, and for fiber and meat. The Chavín produced ch'arki, or llama jerky, which was commonly traded by camelid herders and was the main economic resource for the Chavín people. They also successfully cultivated several crops, including potatoes, quinoa, and maize. They developed an irrigation system to assist the growth of these crops.

Art

Chavín art represents the first widespread, recognizable artistic style in the Andes, and can be divided into two phases: the first phase corresponds to the construction of the "Old Temple" at Chavín de Huántar (c. 900-500 BCE); the second phase corresponds to the construction of Chavín de Huántar's "New Temple" (c. 500-200 BCE). The Old Temple featured the Lanzón, which was housed in a central cruciform chamber in a labyrinth of underground passages. The Lanzón functions as axis mundi, or a pivot point linking the heavens, earth, and underworld.



Figure 34 Shown here is the most important stela statue of the central deity of the Chavín, called the Lanzón.

Chavín art decorated the walls of the temple and includes carvings, sculptures and pottery. Artists depicted exotic creatures found in other regions, such as jaguars and eagles, rather than local plants and animals. The feline figure is one of the most important motifs seen in Chavín art. It has an important religious meaning and is repeated on many



Figure 35 This shell trumpet was likely used in ceremonies. The incised designs show a person of high rank playing a shell trumpet, surrounded by snakes.

carvings and sculptures. Eagles are also commonly seen throughout Chavín art. It was intentionally difficult to interpret and understand, as it was meant to be read by the high priests alone.

The Tello Obelisk is a huge sculpted shaft decorated with images of plants, animals, including caymans and birds, and humans, which may be portraying a creation myth.

Tenon heads are massive stone carvings of fanged jaguar heads, found at the tops of interior walls in Chavín de Huantar.

Influence

Chavín had wide-ranging influence, with its art and architecture styles spreading for miles

around. There is little evidence of warfare in Chavín relics; instead, local citizens were likely controlled by a combination of religious pressure and environmental conditions.

3.3.3: The Valdivia Culture

The Valdivia culture of Ecuador (3500-1800 BCE) is one of the oldest settled cultures recorded in the Americas. They were a sedentary, egalitarian people, known for their early use of pottery, and feminine ceramic figures.

Learning Objective

- Describe the significance of the Valdivia culture

Key Points

- The Valdivia culture of Ecuador (3500-1800 BCE) is one of the oldest settled cultures recorded in the Americas.
- The Valdivia lived in a community that built its houses in a circle or oval around a central plaza and were sedentary, egalitarian people.
- Valdivian pottery (bowls, jars, and feminine figures) are the oldest in the Americas, dating to 2700 BCE.
- Valdivians created rafts with sails, and built a maritime trade network with tribes in the Andes and Amazon.
- A main trading item was the red shell of the thorny oyster, called *Spondylus*.

Key Terms

- **Spondylus** – A genus of bivalve mollusks, also known as thorny oysters.
- **Cassava** – The starchy tuberous root of a tropical tree.
- **Egalitarian** – Believing in the principle that all people are equal.

The Valdivia culture is one of the oldest settled cultures recorded in the Americas. It emerged from the earlier Las Vegas culture, and thrived on the Santa Elena peninsula near the modern-day town of Valdivia, Ecuador, between 3500-1800 BCE.

Life Among the Valdivians

The Valdivia lived in a community that built its houses in a circle or oval around a central



Figure 36 Shown here is the location of the Valdivia culture.

plaza. They were sedentary, egalitarian people who lived off farming and fishing, and occasional deer hunting. From the remains that have been found, it has been determined that Valdivians cultivated maize, kidney beans, squash, cassava, chili peppers, and cotton plants, the latter of which was used to make clothing.

Pottery

Valdivian pottery, which has been dated to 2700 BCE, was initially rough and practical, but over time became splendid,

delicate, and large. Bowls, jars, and female statues were used in daily life and religious ceremonies. They generally used the colors red and gray, and polished dark red pottery is characteristic of the Valdivia period. In their ceramics and stone works, the Valdivia culture showed a progression from the most simple, to much more complicated works. Valdivians were the first Americans to use pottery.

The trademark Valdivia pottery piece is the "Venus" of Valdivia: feminine ceramic figures. The "Venus" of Valdivia likely represented actual people; each figurine is individual and unique, as can be seen in the hairstyles. They were made by joining two rolls of clay, leaving the lower portion separated as legs and forming the body and head from the top portion. The arms were usually very short, and in most cases were bent towards the chest, holding the breasts or chin.



Figure 37 Valdivian pottery is the oldest in America, on display in this image at the Museo de La Plata in Argentina.

Trade

Valdivians created rafts with sails, and built a maritime trade network with tribes in the

Andes and Amazon. A main trading item was the red shell of the thorny oyster, called Spondylus, which were often made into ornaments, and were considered more valuable than gold or silver.

Attributions

- The Caral Civilization
 - "Norte Chico Civilization." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norte_Chico_civilization. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Andean Civilizations." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andean_civilizations. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Caral." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caral>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "PiramidesdeCaral.JPG." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:PiramidesdeCaral.JPG>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "1200px-Caral_1.JPG." https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Caral_1.JPG. Wikimedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- The Chavín Civilization
 - "Lanzón." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lanz%C3%B3n>. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Andean Civilizations." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andean_civilizations. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Chavín Culture." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chav%C3%ADn_culture. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "chavinmap.png." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Chavin-small.png>. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "640px-Chavin_lanzon_stela2_cyark.jpg." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Chavin_lanzon_stela2_cyark.jpg. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "640px-Incised_Strombus-Shell_Trumpet_400-200_B.C.E._L52.1.jpg." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chav%C3%ADn_culture#/media/File:Incised_Strombus-Shell_Trumpet,_400-200_B.C.E.,_L52.1.jpg. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.

- The Valdivia Culture
 - "Pre-Columbian Ecuador." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pre-Columbian_Ecuador. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Valdivia Culture." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valdivia_culture. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "History of Ecuador." <https://lychock.wikispaces.com/History+of+the+Country>. History of the Country CC BY 3.0.
 - "640px-Museo_LP_503_Estilo_Valdivia.jpeg." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valdivia_culture#/media/File:Museo_LP_503_Estilo_Valdivia.JP Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Localización_de_la_Cultura_Valdivia.png." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valdivia_culture#/media/File:Localizaci%C3%B3n_de_la_Cultu Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.

4: Ancient Egypt

4.1: Introduction to Ancient Egypt

4.1.1: The Rise of Egyptian Civilization

In prehistoric times (pre-3200 BCE), many different cultures lived in Egypt along the Nile River, and became progressively more sedentary and reliant on agriculture. By the time of the Early Dynastic Period, these cultures had solidified into a single state.

Learning Objective

- Describe the rise of civilization along the Nile River

Key Points

- The prehistory of Egypt spans from early human settlements to the beginning of the Early Dynastic Period of Egypt (c. 3100 BCE), and is equivalent to the Neolithic period.
- The Late Paleolithic in Egypt began around 30,000 BCE, and featured mobile buildings and tool-making industry.
- The Mesolithic saw the rise of various cultures, including Halfan, Qadan, Sebilian, and Harifian.
- The Neolithic saw the rise of cultures, including Merimde, El Omari, Maadi, Tasian, and Badarian.
- Three phases of Naqada culture included: the rise of new types of pottery (including blacktop-ware and white cross-line-ware), the use of mud-bricks, and increasingly sedentary lifestyles.
- During the Protodynastic period (3200-3000 BCE) powerful kings were in place, and unification of the state occurred, which led to the Early Dynastic Period.

Key Terms

- **Neolithic** – The later part of the Stone Age, during which ground or polished stone weapons and implements were used.

- **Nomadic pastoralism** – The herding of livestock to find fresh pasture to graze.
- **Fertile Crescent** – Also known as the Cradle of Civilization, the Fertile Crescent is a crescent-shaped region containing the comparatively moist and fertile land of Western Asia, the Nile Valley, and the Nile Delta.
- **Serekhs** – An ornamental vignette combining a view of a palace facade and a top view of the royal courtyard. It was used as a royal crest.

The prehistory of Egypt spans from early human settlements to the beginning of the Early Dynastic Period of Egypt (c. 3100 BCE), which started with the first Pharaoh Narmer (also known as Menes). It is equivalent to the Neolithic period, and is divided into cultural periods, named after locations where Egyptian settlements were found.

The Late Paleolithic

This period began around 30,000 BCE. Ancient, mobile buildings, capable of being disassembled and reassembled were found along the southern border near Wadi Halfa. Aterian tool-making industry reached Egypt around 40,000 BCE, and Khormusan industry began between 40,000 and 30,000 BCE.

The Mesolithic

Halfan culture arose along the Nile Valley of Egypt and in Nubia between 18,000 and 15,000 BCE. They appeared to be settled people, descended from the Khormusan people, and spawned the Ibero-Marusian industry. Material remains from these people include stone tools, flakes, and rock paintings.

The Qadan culture practiced wild-grain harvesting along the Nile, and developed sickles and grinding stones to collect and process these plants. These people were likely residents of Libya who were pushed into the Nile Valley due to desiccation in the Sahara. The Sebilian culture (also known as Esna) gathered wheat and barley.

The Harifian culture migrated out of the Fayyum and the Eastern deserts of Egypt to merge with the Pre-Pottery Neolithic B; this created the Circum-Arabian Nomadic Pastoral Complex, who invented nomadic pastoralism, and may have spread Proto-Semitic language throughout Mesopotamia.

The Neolithic

Expansion of the Sahara desert forced more people to settle around the Nile in a sedentary, agriculture- based lifestyle. Around 6000 BCE, Neolithic settlements began to appear in great number in this area, likely as migrants from the Fertile Crescent returned to the area. Weaving occurred for the first time in this period, and people buried their dead close to or within their settlements.

The Merimde culture (5000-4200 BCE) was located in Lower Egypt. People lived in small huts, created simple pottery, and had stone tools. They had cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs, and planted wheat, sorghum, and barley. The first Egyptian life-size clay head comes from this culture.

The El Omari culture (4000-3100 BCE) lived near modern-day Cairo. People lived in huts, and had undecorated pottery and stone tools. Metal was unknown.

The Maadi culture (also known as Buto Maadi) is the most important Lower Egyptian prehistoric culture. Copper was used, pottery was simple and undecorated, and people lived in huts. The dead were buried in cemeteries.

The Tasian culture (4500-3100 BCE) produced a kind of red, brown, and black pottery, called blacktop- ware. From this period on, Upper Egypt was strongly influenced by the culture of Lower Egypt.

The Badarian culture (4400-4000 BCE) was similar to the Tasian, except they improved blacktop-ware and used copper in addition to stone.



Figure 38 This terracotta female figure, c. 3500-3400 BCE, is housed at the Brooklyn Museum.

The Amratian culture (Naqada I) (4000-3500 BCE) continued making blacktop-ware, and

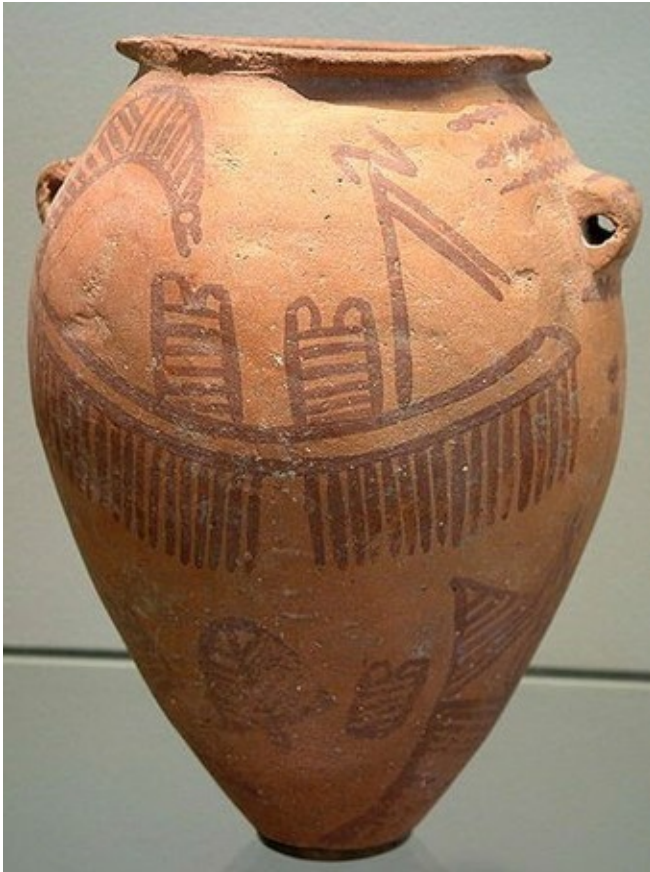


Figure 40 This pottery has a ship theme, and is done in the style of Naqada II.

copper was used for tools and weapons, and silver, gold, lapis, and faience were used as decorations. The first Egyptian-style tombs were built.

Protodynastic Period (Naqada III) (3200 - 3000 BCE)

During this period, the process of state formation, begun in Naqada II, became clearer. Kings headed up powerful polities, but they were unrelated. Political unification was underway, which culminated in the formation of a single state in the Early Dynastic Period. Hieroglyphs may have first been used in this period, along with irrigation. Additionally, royal cemeteries and

added white cross-line-ware, which featured pottery with close, parallel, white, crossed lines. Mud-brick buildings were first seen in this period in small numbers.

The Gerzean culture (Naqada II, 3500-3200 BCE) saw the laying of the foundation for Dynastic Egypt. It developed out of Amratian culture, moving south through Upper Egypt. Its pottery was painted dark red with pictures of animals, people and ships. Life was increasingly sedentary and focused on agriculture, as cities began to grow. Mud bricks were mass-produced,



Figure 39 This serekh (royal crest) shows the Horus falcon.

serekhs (royal crests) came into use.

Attributions

- The Rise of Egyptian Civilization
 - "Tasian Culture." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tasian_culture. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Serekh." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serekh>. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Prehistoric Egypt." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prehistoric_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Naqada III." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naqada_III. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "291px-Egypte_louvre_290.jpg."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serekh#/media/File:Egypte_louvre_290.jpg.
Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "360px-Egypte_louvre_317.jpg."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prehistoric_Egypt#/media/File:Egypte_louvre_317.jpg. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "357px-Female_Figure_ca._3500-3400_B.C.E..jpg."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prehistoric_Egypt#/media/File:Female_Figure,_ca._3500-3400_B.C.E..jpg. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.

4.2: The Old Kingdom

4.2.1: The Old Kingdom

The Old Kingdom, spanning the Third to Sixth Dynasties of Egypt (2686-2181 BCE), saw the prolific construction of pyramids, but declined due to civil instability, resource shortages, and a drop in precipitation.

Learning Objective

- Explain the reasons for the rise and fall of the Old Kingdom

Key Points

- The Old Kingdom is the name commonly given to the period when Egypt gained in complexity and achievement, spanning from the Third Dynasty through the Sixth Dynasty (2686-2181 BCE).
- The royal capital of Egypt during the Old Kingdom was located at Memphis, where the first notable king of the Old Kingdom, Djoser, established his court.
- In the Third Dynasty, formerly independent ancient Egyptian states became known as Nomes, which were ruled solely by the pharaoh. The former rulers of these states were subsequently forced to assume the role of governors, or otherwise work in tax collection.
- Egyptians during this Dynasty worshipped their pharaoh as a god, and believed that he ensured the stability of the cycles that were responsible for the annual flooding of the Nile. This flooding was necessary for their crops.
- The Fourth Dynasty saw multiple large-scale construction projects under pharaohs Sneferu, Khufu, and Khufu's sons Djedefra and Khafra, including the famous pyramid and Sphinx at Giza.
- The Fifth Dynasty saw changes in religious beliefs, including the rise of the cult of the sun god Ra, and the deity Osiris.
- The Sixth Dynasty saw civil war and the loss of centralized power to nomarchs.

Key Terms

- **Ra** – The sun god, or the supreme Egyptian deity, worshipped as the creator of all life, and usually portrayed with a falcon's head bearing a solar disc.

- **Osiris** – The Egyptian god of the underworld, and husband and brother of Isis.
- **Nomes** – Subnational, administrative division of Ancient Egypt.
- **Nomarchs** – Semi-feudal rulers of Ancient Egyptian provinces.
- **Old Kingdom** – Encompassing the Third to Eighth Dynasties, the name commonly given to the period in the 3rd millennium BCE, when Egypt attained its first continuous peak of complexity and achievement.
- **Djoser** – An ancient Egyptian pharaoh of the Third Dynasty, and the founder of the Old Kingdom.
- **Necropolis** – A cemetery, especially a large one belonging to an ancient city.
- **Sneferu** – A king of the Fourth Dynasty, who used the greatest mass of stones in building pyramids.

The Old Kingdom is the name commonly given to the period from the Third Dynasty through the Sixth Dynasty (2686-2181 BCE), when Egypt gained in complexity and achievement. The Old Kingdom is the first of three so-called "Kingdom" periods that mark the high points of civilization in the Nile Valley. During this time, a new type of pyramid (the step) was created, as well as many other massive building projects, including the Sphinx. Additionally, trade became more widespread, new religious ideas were born, and the strong centralized government was subtly weakened and finally collapsed.

The king (not yet called Pharaoh) of Egypt during this period resided in the new royal capital, Memphis. He was considered a living god, and was believed to ensure the annual flooding of the Nile. This flooding was necessary for crop growth. The Old Kingdom is perhaps best known for a large number of pyramids, which were constructed as royal burial places. Thus, the period of the Old Kingdom is often called "The Age of the Pyramids."

Egypt's Old Kingdom was also a dynamic period in the development of Egyptian art. Sculptors created early portraits, the first life-size statues, and perfected the art of carving intricate relief decoration. These had two principal functions: to ensure an ordered existence, and to defeat death by preserving life in the next world.

The Beginning: Third Dynasty (c. 2650-2613 BCE)

The first notable king of the Old Kingdom was Djoser (reigned from 2691-2625 BCE) of the Third Dynasty, who ordered the construction of the step pyramid in Memphis' necropolis, Saqqara. It was in this era that formerly independent ancient Egyptian states became known as nomes, and were ruled solely by the king. The former rulers of these states were forced to assume the role of governors or tax collectors.

Golden Age: Fourth Dynasty (2613-2494 BCE)

The Old Kingdom and its royal power reached a zenith under the Fourth Dynasty, which began with Sneferu (2613-2589 BCE). Using a greater mass of stones than any other king, he built three pyramids: Meidum, the Bent Pyramid, and the Red Pyramid. He also sent his military into Sinai, Nubia and Libya, and began to trade with Lebanon for cedar.

Sneferu was succeeded by his (in)famous son, Khufu (2589-2566 BCE), who built the Great Pyramid of Giza. After Khufu's death, one of his sons built the second pyramid, and the Sphinx in Giza. Creating these massive projects required a centralized government with strong powers, sophistication and prosperity. Builders of the pyramids were not slaves but peasants, working in the farming off-season, along with specialists like stone cutters, mathematicians, and priests. Each household needed to provide a worker for these projects, although the wealthy could have a substitute.



Figure 41 The Pyramid of Khufu at Giza

The Great Pyramid of Giza was built c. 2560 BCE, by Khufu during the Fourth Dynasty. It was built as a tomb for Khufu and constructed over a 20-year period. Modern estimates place construction efforts to require an average workforce of 14,567 people and a peak workforce of 40,000.

The Sphinx is a limestone statue of a reclining mythical creature with a lion's body and a human head that stands on the Giza Plateau on the west bank of the Nile in Giza, Egypt. The face is generally believed to represent the face of King Khafra.

The later kings of the Fourth Dynasty were king Menkaura (2532-2504 BCE), who built the smallest pyramid in Giza, Shepseskaf (2504-2498 BCE), and perhaps Djedefptah (2498-2496 BCE). During this period, there were military expeditions into Canaan and Nubia, spreading Egyptian influence along the Nile into modern-day Sudan.



Figure 42 Great Sphinx of Giza and the pyramid of Khafre.

Religious Changes: Fifth Dynasty (2494-2345 BCE)

The Fifth Dynasty began with Userkaf (2494-2487 BCE), and with several religious changes. The cult of the sun god Ra, and temples built for him, began to grow in importance during the Fifth Dynasty. This lessened efforts to build pyramids. Funerary prayers on royal tombs (called Pyramid Texts) appeared, and the cult of the deity Osiris ascended in importance.

Egyptians began to build ships to trade across maritime routes. Goods included ebony, incense, gold, and copper. They traded with Lebanon for cedar, and perhaps with modern-day Somalia for other goods. Ships were held together by tightly tied ropes.

Decline and Collapse: The Sixth Dynasty (2345- 2181 BCE)

The power of the king and central government declined during this period, while that of *nomarchs* (regional governors) increased. These *nomarchs* were not part of the royal family. They passed down the title through their lineage, thus creating local dynasties that were not under the control of the king. Internal disorder resulted during and after the long reign of Pepi II (2278-2184 BCE), due to succession struggles, and eventually led to civil war. The final blow was a severe drought between 2200-2150 BCE, which prevented Nile flooding. Famine, conflict, and collapse beset the Old Kingdom for decades.

4.2.2: The First Intermediate Period

The First Intermediate Period, the Seventh to Eleventh dynasties, spanned approximately one hundred years (2181-2055 BCE), and was characterized by political instability and conflict between the Heracleopolitan and Theban Kings.

Boundless URL: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/catalog/boundlesscourses>



Edited 2018: Tillamook Bay Community College

Learning Objective

- Describe the processes by which the First Intermediate Period occurred, and then transitioned into the Middle Kingdom

Key Points

- The First Intermediate Period was a dynamic time in history, when rule of Egypt was roughly divided between two competing power bases. One of those bases resided at Heracleopolis in Lower Egypt, a city just south of the Faiyum region. The other resided at Thebes in Upper Egypt.
- The Old Kingdom fell due to problems with succession from the Sixth Dynasty, the rising power of provincial monarchs, and a drier climate that resulted in widespread famine.
- Little is known about the Seventh and Eighth Dynasties due to a lack of evidence, but the Seventh Dynasty was most likely an oligarchy, while Eighth Dynasty rulers claimed to be the descendants of the Sixth Dynasty kings. Both ruled from Memphis.
- The Heracleopolitan Kings saw periods of both violence and peace under their rule, and eventually brought peace and order to the Nile Delta region.
- Siut princes to the south of the Heracleopolitan Kingdom became wealthy from a variety of agricultural and economic activities, and acted as a buffer during times of conflict between the northern and southern parts of Egypt.
- The Theban Kings enjoyed a string of military successes, the last of which was a victory against the Heracleopolitan Kings that unified Egypt under the Twelfth Dynasty.

Key Terms

- **First Intermediate Period** – A period of political conflict and instability lasting approximately 100 years and spanning the Seventh to Eleventh Dynasties.
- **Mentuhotep II** – A pharaoh of the Eleventh Dynasty, who defeated the Heracleopolitan Kings and unified Egypt. Often considered the first pharaoh of the Middle Kingdom.
- **Nomarchs** – Ancient Egyptian administration officials responsible for governing the provinces.

- **Oligarchy** – A form of power structure in which power effectively rests with a small number of people who are distinguished by royalty, wealth, family ties, education, corporate, or military control.

The First Intermediate Period (c. 2181-2055 BCE), often described as a "dark period" in ancient Egyptian history after the end of the Old Kingdom, spanned approximately 100 years. It included the Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, Tenth, and part of the Eleventh dynasties.

The First Intermediate Period was a dynamic time in history when rule of Egypt was roughly divided between two competing power bases: Heracleopolis in Lower Egypt, and Thebes in Upper Egypt. It is believed that political chaos during this time resulted in temples being pillaged, artwork vandalized, and statues of kings destroyed. These two kingdoms eventually came into military conflict. The Theban kings conquered the north, which resulted in the reunification of Egypt under a single ruler during the second part of the Eleventh dynasty.

Events Leading to the First Intermediate Period

The Old Kingdom, which preceded this period, fell for numerous reasons. One was the extremely long reign of Pepi II (the last major king of the Sixth Dynasty), and the resulting succession issues. Another major problem was the rise in power of the provincial nomarchs. Toward the end of the Old Kingdom, the positions of the nomarchs had become hereditary, creating family legacies independent from the king. They erected tombs in their own domains and often raised armies, and engaged in local rivalries. A third reason for the dissolution of centralized kingship was the low level of the Nile inundation, which may have resulted in a drier climate, lower crop yields, and famine.

The Seventh and Eighth Dynasties at Memphis

The Seventh and Eighth dynasties are often overlooked because very little is known about the rulers of these two periods. The Seventh Dynasty was most likely an oligarchy based in Memphis that attempted to retain control of the country. The Eighth Dynasty rulers, claiming to be the descendants of the Sixth Dynasty kings, also ruled from Memphis.

The Heracleopolitan Kings

After the obscure reign of the Seventh and Eighth dynasty kings, a group of rulers rose out

of Heracleopolis in Lower Egypt, and ruled for approximately 94 years. These kings comprise the Ninth and Tenth Dynasties, each with 19 rulers.

The founder of the Ninth Dynasty, Wahkare Khety I, is often described as an evil and violent ruler who caused much harm to the inhabitants of Egypt. He was seized with madness, and, as legend would have it, was eventually killed by a crocodile. Khety I was succeeded by Khety II, also known as Meryibre, whose reign was essentially peaceful but experienced problems in the Nile Delta. His successor, Khety III, brought some degree of order to the Delta, although the power and influence of these Ninth Dynasty kings were still insignificant compared to that of the Old Kingdom kings.

A distinguished line of *nomarchs* rose out of Siut (or Asyut), which was a powerful and wealthy province in the south of the Heracleopolitan kingdom. These warrior princes maintained a close relationship with the kings of the Heracleopolitan royal household, as is evidenced by the inscriptions in their tombs. These inscriptions provide a glimpse at the political situation that was present during their reigns, and describe the Siut *nomarchs* digging canals, reducing taxation, reaping rich harvests, raising cattle herds, and maintaining an army and fleet. The Siut province acted as a buffer state between the northern and southern rulers and bore the brunt of the attacks from the Theban kings.

The Theban Kings

The Theban kings are believed to have been descendants of Intef or Inyotef, the *nomarch* of Thebes, often called the "Keeper of the Door of the South." He is credited with organizing Upper Egypt into an independent ruling body in the south, although he himself did not appear to



Figure 43 Painted sandstone seated statue of Nebhepetre Mentuhotep II, Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

have tried to claim the title of king. Intef II began the Theban assault on northern Egypt, and his successor, Intef III, completed the attack and moved into Middle Egypt against the Heracleopolitan kings. The first three kings of the Eleventh Dynasty (all named Intef) were, therefore, also the last three kings of the First Intermediate Period. They were succeeded by a line of kings who were all called Mentuhotep. Mentuhotep II, also known as Nebhepetra, would eventually defeat the Heracleopolitan kings around 2033 BCE, and unify the country to continue the Eleventh Dynasty and bring Egypt into the Middle Kingdom.

Attributions

- The Old Kingdom
 - "Old Kingdom." http://ancientegypt.wikia.com/wiki/Old_Kingdom. Ancient Egypt Wiki CC BY-SA.
 - "Great Pyramid of Giza." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyramid_of_giza. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Great Sphinx of Giza." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Sphinx_of_Giza. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Fourth Dynasty of Egypt." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fourth_Dynasty_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Fifth Dynasty of Egypt." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fifth_Dynasty_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Third Dynasty of Egypt." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_Dynasty_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Old Kingdom of Egypt." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Kingdom_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Great Pyramid of Giza." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyramid_of_giza. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Egypt Giza Sphinx." <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/6/6c/Egypt.Giza.Sphinx.02.jpg/640px-Egypt.Giza.Sphinx.02.jpg>. Wikipedia Public domain.
- The First Intermediate Period

- "First Intermediate Period."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Intermediate_Period_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
- "oligarchy." <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/oligarchy>. Wiktionary CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "First Intermediate Period."
http://ancientegypt.wikia.com/wiki/First_Intermediate_Period. Ancient Egypt Wiki CC BY-SA.
- "The First Intermediate Period."
[https://egyptologyatperk.wikispaces.com/First+Intermediate+Period+\(Dynasties+7+%E2%80%93+10\)](https://egyptologyatperk.wikispaces.com/First+Intermediate+Period+(Dynasties+7+%E2%80%93+10)). Egyptology At Perk CC BY 3.0.
- "Mentuhotep II."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mentuhotep_II%23mediaviewer/File:Mentuhotep_Seated.jpg. Wikipedia Public domain.

4.3: The Middle Kingdom

4.3.1: The Middle Kingdom

The Middle Kingdom was a period of Egyptian history spanning the Eleventh through Twelfth Dynasty (2000-1700 BCE), when centralized power consolidated a unified Egypt.

Learning Objective

- Describe the various characteristics of Sensuret III's rule during the height of the Middle Kingdom

Key Points

- The Middle Kingdom had two phases: the end of the Eleventh Dynasty, which ruled from Thebes, and the Twelfth Dynasty onwards, which was centred around el-Lisht.
- During the First Intermediate Period, the governors of the *nomes* of Egypt— called *nomarchs*— gained considerable power. Amenemhet I also instituted a system of co-regency, which ensured a smooth transition from monarch to monarch and contributed to the stability of the Twelfth Dynasty.
- The height of the Middle Kingdom came under the rules of Sensuret III and Amenemhat III, the former of whom established clear boundaries for Egypt, and the latter of whom efficiently exploited Egyptian resources to bring about a period of economic prosperity.
- The Middle Kingdom declined into the Second Intermediate Period during the Thirteenth Dynasty, after a gradual loss of dynastic power and the disintegration of Egypt.

Key Terms

- **Amenemhat III** – Egyptian king who saw a great period of economic prosperity through efficient exploitation of natural resources.
- **Nomes** – Subnational administrative divisions within ancient Egypt.
- **Middle Kingdom** – Period of unification in Ancient Egyptian history, stretching from the end of the Eleventh Dynasty to the Thirteenth Dynasty, roughly between 2030-1640 BCE.
- **Senusret III** – Warrior-king during the Twelfth Dynasty, who centralized power

within Egypt through various military successes.

- **Sobekneferu** – The first known female ruler of Egypt.
- **Waret** – Administrative divisions in Egypt.

The Middle Kingdom, also known as the Period of Reunification, is a period in the history of Ancient Egypt stretching from the end of the Eleventh Dynasty to the end of the Twelfth Dynasty, roughly between 2000-1700 BCE. There were two phases: the end of the Eleventh Dynasty, which ruled from Thebes, and the Twelfth Dynasty onwards, which was centered around el-Lisht.

The End of the Eleventh Dynasty and the Rise of the Twelfth Dynasty

Toward the end of the First Intermediate Period, Mentuhotep II and his successors unified Egypt under a single rule, and commanded such faraway locations as Nubia and the Sinai. He reigned for 51 years and restored the cult of the ruler, considering himself a god and wearing the headdresses of Amun and Min. His descendants ruled Egypt, until a vizier, Amenemhet I, came to power and initiated the Twelfth Dynasty.

From the Twelfth dynasty onward, pharaohs often kept well-trained standing armies, which formed the basis of larger forces raised for defense against invasion, or for expeditions up the Nile or across the Sinai. However, the Middle Kingdom remained defensive in its military strategy, with fortifications built at the First Cataract of the Nile, in the Delta and across the Sinai Isthmus.

Amenemhet I never held the absolute power commanded, in theory, by the Old Kingdom pharaohs. During the First Intermediate Period, the governors of the nomes of Egypt—nomarchs—gained considerable power. To strengthen his position, Amenemhet required registration of land, modified nome borders, and appointed nomarchs directly when offices became vacant. Generally, however, he acquiesced to the nomarch system, creating a strongly feudal organization.

In his 20th regnal year, Amenemhat established his son, Senusret I, as his co-regent. This instituted a practice that would be used throughout the Middle and New Kingdoms. The reign of Amenemhat II, successor to Senusret I, has been characterized as largely

peaceful. It appears Amenemhet allowed nomarchs to become hereditary again. In his 33rd regnal year, he appointed his son, Senusret II, co-regent.

There is no evidence of military activity during the reign of Senusret II. Senusret instead appears to have focused on domestic issues, particularly the irrigation of the Faiyum. He reigned only fifteen years, and was succeeded by his son, Senusret III.

Height of the Middle Kingdom

Senusret III was a warrior-king, and launched a series of brutal campaigns in Nubia. After his victories, Senusret built a series of massive forts throughout the country as boundary markers; the locals were closely watched.

Domestically, Senusret has been given credit for an administrative reform that put more power in the hands of appointees of the central government. Egypt was divided into three waret, or administrative divisions: North, South, and Head of the South (perhaps Lower Egypt, most of Upper Egypt, and the nomes of the original Theban kingdom during the war with Herakleopolis, respectively). The power of the nomarchs seems to drop off permanently during Sensuret's reign, which has been taken to indicate that the central government had finally suppressed them, though there is no record that Senusret took direct action against them.



Figure 44 Statue head of Sensuret III, one of the kings in the Twelfth Dynasty.

The reign of Amenemhat III was the height of Middle Kingdom economic prosperity, and is remarkable for the degree to which Egypt exploited its resources. Mining camps in the Sinai, which had previously been used only by intermittent expeditions, were operated on a semi-permanent basis. After a reign of 45 years, Amenemhet III was succeeded by

Amenemhet IV, under whom dynastic power began to weaken. Contemporary records of the Nile flood levels indicate that the end of the reign of Amenemhet III was dry, and crop failures may have helped to destabilize the dynasty. Furthermore, Amenemhet III had an inordinately long reign, which led to succession problems. Amenemhet IV was succeeded by Sobekneferu, the first historically attested female king of Egypt, who ruled for no more than four years. She apparently had no heirs, and when she died the Twelfth Dynasty came to a sudden end.

Decline into the Second Intermediate Period

After the death of Sobeknefru, Egypt was ruled by a series of ephemeral kings for about 10-15 years. Ancient Egyptian sources regard these as the first kings of the Thirteenth Dynasty.

After the initial dynastic chaos, a series of longer reigning, better attested kings ruled for about 50-80 years. The strongest king of this period, Neferhotep I, ruled for 11 years, maintained effective control of Upper Egypt, Nubia, and the Delta, and was even recognized as the suzerain of the ruler of Byblos. At some point during the Thirteenth Dynasty, the provinces of Xoïs and Avaris began governing themselves. Thus began the final portion of the Thirteenth Dynasty, when southern kings continued to reign over Upper Egypt; when the unity of Egypt fully disintegrated, however, the Middle Kingdom gave way to the Second Intermediate Period.

4.3.2: The Second Intermediate Period

The Second Intermediate Period (c. 1650-1550 BCE) spanned the Fourteenth to Seventeenth Dynasties, and was a period in which decentralized rule split Egypt between the Theban-based Seventeenth Dynasty in Upper Egypt and the Sixteenth Dynasty under the Hyksos in the north.

Learning Objective

- Explain the dynamics between the various groups of people vying for power during the Second Intermediate Period

Key Points

- The brilliant Twelfth Dynasty was succeeded by a weaker Thirteenth Dynasty,

Boundless URL: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/catalog/boundlesscourses>



Edited 2018: Tillamook Bay Community College

which experienced a splintering of power.

- The Hyksos made their first appearance during the reign of Sobekhotep IV, and overran Egypt at the end of the Fourteenth Dynasty. They ruled through the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Dynasties.
- The Abydos Dynasty was a short-lived Dynasty that ruled over part of Upper Egypt, and was contemporaneous with the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Dynasties.
- The Seventeenth Dynasty established itself in Thebes around the time that the Hyksos took power in Egypt, and co-existed with the Hyksos through trade for a period of time. However, rulers from the Seventeenth Dynasty undertook several wars of liberation that eventually once again unified Egypt in the Eighteenth Dynasty.

Key Terms

- **Hyksos** – An Asiatic people from West Asia who took over the eastern Nile Delta, ending the Thirteenth dynasty of Egypt and initiating the Second Intermediate Period.
- **Abydos Dynasty** – A short-lived local dynasty ruling over parts of Upper Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period in Ancient Egypt.
- **Baal** – The native storm god of the Hyksos.
- **Second Intermediate Period** – Spanning the Fourteenth to Seventeenth Dynasties, a period of Egyptian history where power was split between the Hyksos and a Theban-based dynasty in Upper Egypt.

The Second Intermediate Period (c. 1782-1550 BCE) marks a time when Ancient Egypt once again fell into disarray between the end of the Middle Kingdom, and the start of the New Kingdom. It is best known as the period when the Hyksos, who reigned during the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Dynasties, made their appearance in Egypt.

The Thirteenth Dynasty (1803 - 1649 BCE)

The brilliant Egyptian Twelfth Dynasty—and the Golden Age of the Middle Kingdom—came to an end around 1800 BCE with the death of Queen Sobekneferu (1806-1802 BCE), and was succeeded by the much weaker Thirteenth Dynasty (1803-1649 BCE). Pharaohs ruled from Memphis until the Hyksos conquered the capital in 1650 BCE.

The Fourteenth Dynasty (c. 1725-1650 BCE)

The Thirteenth Dynasty proved unable to hold onto the long land of Egypt, and the provincial ruling family in Xoïs, located in the marshes of the western Delta, broke away from the central authority to form the Fourteenth Dynasty. The capital of this dynasty was likely Avaris. It existed concurrently with the Thirteenth Dynasty, and its rulers seemed to be of Canaanite or West Semitic descent.

The Fifteenth Dynasty (c. 1650-1550 BCE)

The Hyksos made their first appearance in 1650 BCE and took control of the town of Avaris. They would also conquer the Sixteenth Dynasty in Thebes and a local dynasty in Abydos (see below). The Hyksos were of mixed Asiatic origin with mainly Semitic components, and their native storm god, Baal, became associated with the Egyptian storm god Seth. They brought technological innovation to Egypt, including bronze and pottery techniques, new breeds of animals and new crops, the horse and chariot, composite bow, battle-axes, and fortification techniques for warfare. These advances helped Egypt later rise to prominence.



Figure 45 The area in orange is the territory possibly under control of the Fourteenth Dynasty.



Figure 46 Thebes was the capital of many of the Sixteenth Dynasty pharaohs.

The Sixteenth Dynasty

This dynasty ruled the Theban region in Upper Egypt for 70 years, while the armies of the Fifteenth Dynasty advanced against southern enemies and encroached on Sixteenth territory. Famine was an issue during this period, most notably during the reign of Neferhotep III.

The Abydos Dynasty

The Abydos Dynasty was a short-lived local dynasty that ruled over part of Upper Egypt and was contemporaneous with the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Dynasties c. 1650-1600 BCE. The royal necropolis of the Abydos Dynasty was found in the southern part of Abydos, in

an area called Anubis Mountain in ancient times, adjacent to the tombs of the Middle Kingdom rulers.



Figure 47 This map shows the possible extent of power of the Abydos Dynasty (in red).

The Seventeenth Dynasty (c. 1580-1550 BCE)

Around the time Memphis and Itj-tawy fell to the Hyksos, the native Egyptian ruling house in Thebes declared its independence from Itj-tawy and became the Seventeenth Dynasty. This dynasty would eventually lead the war of liberation that drove the Hyksos back into Asia. The Theban-based Seventeenth Dynasty restored numerous temples throughout Upper Egypt while maintaining peaceful trading relations with the Hyksos kingdom in the north. Indeed, Senakhtenre Ahmose, the first king in the line of Ahmoside kings, even imported white limestone from the Hyksos-controlled region of Tura to make a granary door at the Temple of Karnak. However, his successors,—the final two kings of this dynasty—

Seqenenre Tao and Kamose, defeated the Hyksos through

several wars of liberation. With the creation of the Eighteenth Dynasty around 1550 BCE, the New Kingdom period of Egyptian history began with Ahmose I, its first pharaoh, who completed the expulsion of the Hyksos from Egypt and placed the country, once again, under centralized administrative control.

Attributions

- The Middle Kingdom
 - "Middle Kingdom of Egypt."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_Kingdom_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Middle Kingdom." http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Middle_Kingdom. Wiktionary CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Middle Kingdom of Egypt."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_Kingdom_of_Egypt%23mediaviewer/File:GD-EG-Louxor-116.JPG. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 2.5.

- The Second Intermediate Period
 - "Second Intermediate Period."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Intermediate_Period_of_Egypt.
 Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Abydos Dynasty." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abydos_Dynasty. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Thirteenth Dynasty of Egypt."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirteenth_Dynasty_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Fourteenth Dynasty of Egypt."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fourteenth_Dynasty_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Fifteenth Dynasty of Egypt."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fifteenth_Dynasty_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Hyksos." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyksos>. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Seventeenth Dynasty."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seventeenth_Dynasty_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "The Second Intermediate Period (Dynasties 14-17)."
[https://egyptologyatperk.wikispaces.com/The+Second+Intermediate+Period+\(Dynasties+14+%E2%80%93+17\)](https://egyptologyatperk.wikispaces.com/The+Second+Intermediate+Period+(Dynasties+14+%E2%80%93+17)). Egyptology At Perk CC BY 3.0.
 - "Second Intermediate Period."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Intermediate_Period_of_Egypt%23media_viewer/File:Egy Wikipedia CC BY-SA 1.0 Generic.
 - "Abydos_Dynasty.png."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Abydos_Dynasty.png. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "14th_dynasty_territory.png."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:14th_dynasty_territory.png. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.

4.4: The New Kingdom

4.4.1: The New Kingdom

The New Kingdom of Egypt spanned the Eighteenth to Twentieth Dynasties (c. 1550-1077 BCE), and was Egypt's most prosperous time. It was ruled by pharaohs Hatshepsut, Thutmose III, Akhenaten, Tutankhamun and Ramesses II.

Learning Objective

- Explain the reasons for the collapse of the New Kingdom

Key Points

- The New Kingdom saw Egypt attempt to create a buffer against the Levant and by attaining its greatest territorial by extending into Nubia and the Near East. This was possibly a result of the foreign rule of the Hyksos during the Second Intermediate Period,
- The Eighteenth Dynasty contained some of Egypt's most famous pharaohs, including Hatshepsut, Akhenaten, Thutmose III, and Tutankhamun. Hatshepsut concentrated on expanding Egyptian trade, while Thutmose III consolidated power.
- Akhenaten's devotion to Aten defined his reign with religious fervor, while art flourished under his rule and attained an unprecedented level of realism.
- Due to Akenaten's lack of interest in international affairs, the Hittites gradually extended their influence into Phoenicia and Canaan.
- Ramesses II attempted war against the Hittites, but eventually agreed to a peace treaty after an indecisive result.
- The heavy cost of military efforts in addition to climatic changes resulted in a loss of centralized power at the end of the Twentieth Dynasty, leading to the Third Intermediate Period.

Key Terms

- **New Kingdom** – The period in ancient Egyptian history between the 16th century BCE and the 11th century BCE that covers the Eighteenth, Nineteenth, and Twentieth Dynasties of Egypt. Considered to be the peak of Egyptian power.
- **Thutmose III** – The sixth pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty, who greatly

Boundless URL: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/catalog/boundlesscourses>



Edited 2018: Tillamook Bay Community College

consolidated political power through a series of military conquests.

- **Akhenaten** – Pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty known for his religious fervor to the god Aten.
- **Hatshepsut** – The fifth pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty, who expanded Egyptian trade.
- **Tutankhamun** – An Egyptian pharaoh of the 18th dynasty (ruled c. 1332 BC-1323 BC in the conventional chronology), during the period of Egyptian history known as the New Kingdom. He is popularly referred to as King Tut.
- **Aten** – The disk of the sun in ancient Egyptian mythology, and originally an aspect of Ra.
- **Ramesses II** – The third pharaoh of the Nineteenth Dynasty of Egypt, who made peace with the Hittites. Often regarded as the greatest, most celebrated, and most powerful pharaoh of the Egyptian Empire.

The New Kingdom of Egypt, also referred to as the Egyptian Empire, is the period in ancient Egyptian history between 1550-1070 BCE, covering the Eighteenth, Nineteenth, and Twentieth Dynasties of Egypt. The New Kingdom followed the Second Intermediate Period, and was succeeded by the Third Intermediate Period. It was Egypt's most prosperous time and marked the peak of its power.

The Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties (1292-1069 BCE) are also known as the Ramesside period, after the eleven pharaohs that took the name of Ramesses. The New Kingdom saw Egypt attempt to create a buffer against the Levant and attain its greatest territorial extent. This was possibly a result of the foreign rule of the Hyksos during the Second Intermediate Period

The Eighteenth Dynasty (c. 1543-1292 BCE)

The Eighteenth Dynasty, also known as the Thutmosid Dynasty, contained some of Egypt's most famous pharaohs, including Ahmose I, Hatshepsut, Thutmose III, Amenhotep III, Akhenaten (c. 1353-1336 BCE) and his queen Nefertiti, and Tutankhamun. Queen Hatshepsut (c. 1479 - 1458 BCE) concentrated on expanding Egypt's external trade by sending a commercial expedition to the land of Punt, and was the longest-reigning woman pharaoh of an indigenous dynasty. Thutmose III, who would become known as the

greatest military pharaoh, expanded Egypt's army and wielded it with great success to



Figure 48 Akhenaten, born Amenhotep IV, was the son of Queen Tiye. He rejected the old Egyptian religion and promoted the Aten as a supreme deity.

consolidate the empire created by his predecessors. These victories maximized Egyptian power and wealth during the reign of Amenhotep III. It was also during the reign of Thutmose III that the term "pharaoh," originally referring to the king's palace, became a form of address for the king.

One of the best-known Eighteenth Dynasty pharaohs is Amenhotep IV (c. 1353-1336 BCE), who changed his name to Akhenaten in honor of Aten and whose exclusive worship of the deity is often interpreted as the first instance of monotheism. Under his reign Egyptian art flourished and attained an unprecedented level of realism. Toward the end of this dynasty, the Hittites had expanded their

influence into Phoenicia and Canaan, the outcome of which would be inherited by the rulers of the Nineteenth Dynasty.

The Nineteenth Dynasty (c. 1292-1187 BCE)

New Kingdom Egypt would reach the height of its power under Seti I and Ramesses II, who fought against the Libyans and Hittites. The city of Kadesh was a flashpoint, captured first by Seti I and then used as a peace bargain with the Hatti, and later attacked again by Ramesses II. Eventually, the Egyptians and Hittites signed a lasting peace treaty.



Figure 49 This map shows the Egyptian (green) and Hittite (red) Empires around 1274 BCE.

The Hittite Empire covered a large portion of modern-day Turkey, in addition to portions of modern-day Syria and Lebanon. The Egyptian Empire covered a large portion of modern-day Egypt, in addition to portions of modern-day Sudan, Palestine, Israel, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan.

Ramesses II had a large number of children, and he built a massive funerary complex for his sons in the Valley of the Kings. The Nineteenth Dynasty ended in a revolt led by Setnakhte, the founder of the Twentieth Dynasty.



Figure 50 Detail of the Temple of Ramesses II.

The Twentieth Dynasty (c. 1187-1064 BCE)

The last "great" pharaoh from the New Kingdom is widely regarded to be Ramesses III. In the eighth year of his reign, the Sea Peoples invaded Egypt by land and sea, but were defeated by Ramesses III.

The heavy cost of warfare slowly drained Egypt's treasury and contributed to the gradual decline of the Egyptian Empire in Asia. The severity of the difficulties is indicated by the fact that the first known labor strike in recorded history occurred during the 29th year of Ramesses III's reign, over food rations. Despite a palace conspiracy which may have killed Ramesses III, three of his sons ascended the throne successively as Ramesses IV,

Ramesses VI and Ramesses VIII. Egypt was increasingly beset by droughts, below-normal flooding of the Nile, famine, civil unrest, and official corruption. The power of the last pharaoh of the dynasty, Ramesses XI, grew so weak that, in the south, the High Priests of Amun at Thebes became the de facto rulers of Upper Egypt. The Smendes

controlled Lower Egypt even before Ramesses XI's death. Menes eventually founded the Twenty-first Dynasty at Tanis.

4.4.2: Hatshepsut

Hatshepsut ruled Egypt in the Eighteenth Dynasty (1478-1458 BCE), and brought wealth and a focus on large building projects. She was one of just a handful of female rulers.

Learning Objective

- Describe the achievements of Hatshepsut in Ancient Egypt

Key Points

- Hatshepsut reigned Egypt from 1478-1458 BCE, during the Eighteenth Dynasty. She ruled longer than any other woman of an indigenous Egyptian dynasty.
- Hatshepsut established trade networks that helped build the wealth of the Eighteenth Dynasty.
- Hundreds of construction projects and statuary were commissioned by Hatshepsut, including obelisks and monuments at the Temple of Karnak.
- While not the first female ruler of Egypt, Hatshepsut's reign was longer and more prosperous; she oversaw a peaceful, wealthy era.
- The average woman in Egypt was quite liberated for the time, and had a variety of property and other rights.
- Hatshepsut died in 1458 BCE in middle age, possibly of diabetes and bone cancer. Her mummy was discovered in 1903 and identified in 2007.

Key Terms

- **Kohl** – A black powder used as eye makeup.
- **Obelisks** – Stone pillars, typically having a square or rectangular cross section and a pyramidal tip, used as a monument.
- **Co-regent** – The situation wherein a monarchical position, normally held by one person, is held by two.

Hatshepsut reigned in Egypt from 1478-1458 BCE, during the Eighteenth Dynasty, longer than any other woman of an indigenous Egyptian dynasty. According to Egyptologist

James Henry Breasted, she was "the first great woman in history of whom we are informed." She was the daughter of Thutmose I and his wife Ahmes. Hatshepsut's husband, Thutmose II, was also a child of Thutmose I, but was conceived with a different wife. Hatshepsut had a daughter named Neferure with her husband, Thutmose II. Thutmose II also fathered Thutmose III with Iset, a secondary wife. Hatshepsut ascended to the throne as co-regent with Thutmose III, who came to the throne as a two-year old child.

Trade Networks

Hatshepsut established trade networks that helped build the wealth of the Eighteenth Dynasty. This included a successful mission to the Land of Punt in the ninth year of her reign, which brought live myrrh trees and frankincense (which Hatshepsut used as kohl eyeliner) to Egypt. She also sent raiding expeditions to Byblos and Sinai, and may have led military campaigns against Nubia and Canaan.



Figure 51 This statue of Hatshepsut is housed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

Building Projects



Figure 52 The colonnaded design is evident in this temple.

Hatshepsut was a prolific builder, commissioning hundreds of construction projects and statuary. She had monuments constructed at the Temple of Karnak, and restored the original Precinct of Mut at Karnak, which had been ravaged during the Hyksos occupation of Egypt. She installed twin obelisks (the tallest in the world at that time) at the entrance to this temple, one of which still stands.

Karnak's Red Chapel was intended as a shrine to her life, and may have stood with these obelisks.

The Temple of Pakhet was a monument to Bast and Sekhmet, lioness war goddesses. Later in the Nineteenth Dynasty, King Seti I attempted to take credit for this monument. However, Hatshepsut's masterpiece was a mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri; the focal point was the Djoser-Djeseru ("the Sublime of Sublimes"), a colonnaded structure built 1,000 years before the Greek Parthenon. The Hatshepsut needle, a granite obelisk, is considered another great accomplishment.

Female Rule

Hatshepsut was not the first female ruler of Egypt. She had been preceded by Merneith of the First Dynasty, Nimaathap of the Third Dynasty, Nitocris of the Sixth Dynasty, Sobekneferu of the Twelfth Dynasty, Ahhotep I of the Seventeenth Dynasty, Ahmose-Nefertari, and others. However, Hatshepsut's reign was longer and more prosperous; she



Figure 53 Hatshepsut, on the right, is shown having the trappings of a greater role.

oversaw a peaceful, wealthy era. She was also proficient at self-promotion, which was enabled by her wealth.

The word "king" was considered gender-neutral, and women could take the title. During her father's reign, she held the powerful office of God's Wife, and as wife to her husband, Thutmose II, she took an active role in administration of the kingdom. As pharaoh, she faced few challenges, even from her co-regent, who

headed up the powerful Egyptian army and could have unseated her, had he chosen to do so.

Women's Status in Egypt

The average woman in Egypt was quite liberated for the time period. While her foremost role was as mother and wife, an average woman might have worked in weaving, perfume making, or entertainment. Women could own their own businesses, own and sell property, serve as witnesses in court cases, be in the company of men, divorce and remarry, and have access to one-third of their husband's property.

Hatshepsut's Death

Hatshepsut died in 1458 BCE in middle age; no cause of death is known, although she may have had diabetes and bone cancer, likely from a carcinogenic skin lotion. Her mummy was discovered in the Valley of the Kings by Howard Carter in 1903, although at the time, the mummy's identity was not known. In 2007, the mummy was found to be a match to a missing tooth known to have belonged to Hatshepsut.

After her death, mostly during Thutmose III's reign, haphazard attempts were made to remove Hatshepsut from certain historical and pharaonic records. Amenhotep II, the son of Thutmose III, may have been responsible. The Tyldesley hypothesis states that Thutmose III may have decided to attempt to scale back Hatshepsut's role to that of regent rather than king.



Figure 54 These statues of Hatshepsut at her tomb show her holding the crook and flail associated with Osiris.

4.4.3: The Third Intermediate Period

The Third Intermediate Period (c. 1069-664 BCE) spanned the Twenty-first to Twenty-sixth Dynasties, and was marked by internal divisions within Egypt, as well as conquest and rule by foreigners.

Learning Objective

- Describe the general landscape of the political chaos during Third Intermediate Period

Key Points

- The period of the Twenty-first Dynasty was characterized by the country's fracturing

kingship, as power became split more and more between the pharaoh and the High Priests of Amun at Thebes.

- Egypt was temporarily reunified during the Twenty-second Dynasty, and experienced a period of stability, but shattered into two states after the reign of Osorkon II.
- Civil war raged in Thebes and was eventually quelled by Osorkon B, who founded the Upper Egyptian Libyan Dynasty. This dynasty collapsed, however, with the rise of local city-states.
- The Twenty-fourth Dynasty saw the conquest of the Nubians over native Egyptian rulers, and the Nubians ruled through the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty, when they expanded Egyptian power to the extent of the New Kingdom and restored many temples. Due to lacking military power, however, the
- Egyptians were conquered by the Assyrians toward the end of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty.
- The end of the Third Intermediate Period and the Twenty-sixth Dynasty saw Assyrian rule over Egypt. Although some measure of independence was regained, Egypt faced pressure and eventual defeat at the hands of the Persians.

Key Terms

- **Nubia** – A region along the Nile River, located in northern Sudan and southern Egypt.
- **Third Intermediate Period** – Spanning the Twenty-first to Twenty-sixth Dynasties. A period of Egyptian decline and political instability.
- **Assyrians** – A major Mesopotamian East Semitic-speaking people.
- **High Priests of Amun** – The highest-ranking priest in the priesthood of the Ancient Egyptian god, Amun. Assumed significant power along with the pharaoh in the Twenty-First Dynasty.

The Third Intermediate Period of Ancient Egypt began with the death of the last pharaoh of the New Kingdom, Ramesses XI in 1070 BCE, and ended with the start of the Postdynastic Period. The Third Intermediate Period was one of decline and political instability. It was marked by a division of the state for much of the period, as well as

conquest and rule by foreigners. However, many aspects of life for ordinary Egyptians changed relatively little.

The Twenty-First Dynasty (c. 1077-943 BCE)

The period of the Twenty-first Dynasty was characterized by the country's fracturing kingship. Even in Ramesses XI's day, the Twentieth Dynasty of Egypt was losing its grip on power in the city of Thebes, where priests were becoming increasingly powerful. The Amun priests of Thebes owned 2/3 of all the temple lands in Egypt, 90% of ships, and many other resources. Consequently, the Amun priests were as powerful as the Pharaoh, if not more so. After the death of Ramesses XI, his successor, Smendes I, ruled from the city of Tanis, but was mainly active only in Lower Egypt. Meanwhile, the High Priests of Amun at Thebes effectively ruled Middle and Upper Egypt in all but name. During this time, however, this division was relatively insignificant, due to the fact that both priests and pharaohs came from the same family.

The Twenty-Second (c. 943-716 BCE) and Twenty-Third (c. 880-720 BCE) Dynasties

The country was firmly reunited by the Twenty-second Dynasty, founded by Shoshenq I in approximately 943 BCE. Shoshenq I descended from Meshwesh immigrants originally from Ancient Libya. This unification brought stability to the country for well over a century, but after the reign of Osorkon II, the country had shattered in two states. Shoshenq III of the Twenty-Second Dynasty controlled Lower Egypt by 818 BCE, while Takelot II and his son Osorkon (the future Osorkon III) ruled Middle and Upper Egypt. In Thebes, a civil war engulfed the city between the forces of Pedubast I, a self-proclaimed pharaoh. Eventually Osorkon B defeated his enemies, and proceeded to found the Upper Egyptian Libyan Dynasty of Osorkon III, Takelot III, and Rudamun. This kingdom quickly fragmented after Rudamun's death with the rise of local city-states.

The Twenty-Fourth Dynasty (c. 732-720 BCE)

The Nubian kingdom to the south took full advantage of the division of the country. Nubia had already extended its influence into the Egyptian city of Thebes around 752 BCE, when the Nubian ruler Kashta coerced Shepenupet into adopting his own daughter Amenirdis as her successor. Twenty years later, around 732 BCE, these machinations bore fruit for Nubia when Kashta's successor Piye marched north in his Year 20 campaign into Egypt,

and defeated the combined might of the native Egyptian rulers.

The Twenty-Fifth Dynasty (c. 760-656 BCE)

Following his military conquests, Piye established the Twenty-fifth Dynasty and appointed the defeated rulers as his provincial governors. Rulers under this dynasty originated in the Nubian Kingdom of Kush. Their reunification of Lower Egypt, Upper Egypt, and Kish created the largest Egyptian empire since the New Kingdom. They assimilated into Egyptian culture but also brought some aspects of Kushite culture. During this dynasty, the first widespread building of pyramids since the Middle Kingdom resumed. The Nubians were driven out of Egypt in 670 BCE by the Assyrians, who installed an initial puppet dynasty loyal to the Assyrians.



Figure 55 Statues of the Nubian Pharaohs of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty.

End of the Third Intermediate Period

Upper Egypt remained under the rule of Tantamani for a time, while Lower Egypt was ruled by the Twenty-sixth Dynasty, starting in 664 BCE. Although originally established as clients of the Assyrians, the Twenty-sixth Dynasty managed to take advantage of the time of troubles facing the Assyrian empire to successfully bring about Egypt's political independence. In 656 BCE, Psamtik I (last of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty kings) occupied Thebes and became pharaoh, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt. He proceeded to reign over a united Egypt for 54 years from his capital at Sais. Four successive Saite kings continued guiding Egypt through a period of peace and prosperity from 610-525 BCE. Unfortunately for this dynasty, however, a new power was growing in the Near East: Persia. Pharaoh Psamtik III succeeded his father, Ahmose II, only six months before he had to face the Persian Empire at Pelusium. The new king was no match for the Persians, who had already taken Babylon. Psamtik III was defeated and briefly escaped to Memphis. He was ultimately imprisoned, and later executed at Susa, the capital of the Persian king Cambyses. With the Saite kings exterminated, Cambyses assumed the formal title of Pharaoh.

4.4.4: The Decline of Ancient Egypt

Ancient Egypt went through a series of occupations and suffered a slow decline over a long period of time. First occupied by the Assyrians, then the Persians, and later the Macedonians and Romans, Egyptians would never again reach the glorious heights of self-rule they achieved during previous periods.

Learning Objective

- Explain why Ancient Egypt declined as an economic and political force

Key Points

- After a renaissance in the 25th Dynasty, ancient Egypt was occupied by Assyrians, initiating the Late Period.
- In 525 BCE, Egypt was conquered by Persia, and incorporated into the Achaemenid Persian Empire.
- In 332 BCE, Egypt was given to Macedonia and Alexander the Great. During this period, the new capital of Alexandria flourished.
- Egypt became a Roman province after the defeat of Marc Antony and Queen Cleopatra VII in 30 BCE. During this period, religious and other traditions slowly declined.

Key Terms

- **Hellenistic** – Relating to Greek history, language, and culture, during the time between the death of Alexander the Great and the defeat of Mark Antony and Cleopatra in 31 BCE.
- **Hieroglyphics** – A formal writing system used by ancient Egyptians, consisting of pictograms.
- **Pagan** – A person holding religious beliefs other than those of the main world religions, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.

Ancient Egypt went through a series of occupations and suffered a slow decline over a long period of time. First occupied by the Assyrians, then the Persians, and later the Macedonians and Romans, Egyptians would never again reach the glorious heights of self-rule they achieved during previous periods.

Third Intermediate Period (1069-653 BCE)

After a renaissance in the Twenty-fifth dynasty, when religion, arts, and architecture (including pyramids) were restored, struggles against the Assyrians led to eventual conquest of Egypt by Esarhaddon in 671 BCE. Native Egyptian rulers were installed but could not retain control of the area, and former Pharaoh Taharqa seized control of southern Egypt for a time, until he was defeated again by the Assyrians. Taharqa's successor, Tanutamun, also made a failed attempt to regain Egypt, but was defeated.

Late Period (672-332 BCE)

Having been victorious in Egypt, the Assyrians installed a series of vassals known as the Saite kings of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty. In 653 BCE, one of these kings, Psamtik I, was able to achieve a peaceful separation from the Assyrians with the help of Lydian and Greek mercenaries. In 609 BCE, the Egyptians attempted to save the Assyrians, who were losing their war with the Babylonians, Chaldeans, Medians, and Scythians. However, they were unsuccessful.

In 525 BCE, the Persians, led by Cambyses II, invaded Egypt, capturing the Pharaoh Psamtik III. Egypt was joined with Cyprus and Phoenicia in the sixth satrapy of the Achaemenid Persian Empire, also called the Twenty-seventh Dynasty. This ended in 402 BCE, and the last native royal house of dynastic Egypt, known as the Thirtieth Dynasty, was ruled by Nectanebo II. Persian rule was restored briefly in 343 BCE, known as the Thirty-first Dynasty, but in 332 BCE, Egypt was handed over peacefully to the Macedonian ruler, Alexander the Great.

Macedonian and Ptolemaic Period (332-30 BCE)

Alexander the Great was welcomed into Egypt as a deliverer, and the new capital city of Alexandria was a showcase of Hellenistic rule, capped by the famous Library of Alexandria. Native Egyptian traditions were honored, but eventually local revolts, plus interest in Egyptian goods by the Romans, caused the Romans to wrest Egypt from the Macedonians.

Roman Period (30 BCE-641CE)

Egypt became a Roman province after the defeat of Marc Antony and Queen Cleopatra VII in 30 BCE. Some Egyptian traditions, including mummification and worship of local gods,

continued, but local administration was handled exclusively by Romans. The spread of Christianity proved to be too powerful, and pagan rites were banned and temples closed. Egyptians continued to speak their language, but the ability to read hieroglyphics disappeared as temple priests diminished.

Attributions

- The New Kingdom
 - "Nineteenth Dynasty of Egypt."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nineteenth_Dynasty_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Twentieth Dynasty of Egypt."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twentieth_Dynasty_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Eighteenth Dynasty of Egypt."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eighteenth_Dynasty_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "New Kingdom of Egypt."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Kingdom_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Hitt_Egypt_Perseus.png."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Hitt_Egypt_Perseus.png. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "New Kingdom of Egypt."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Kingdom_of_Egypt%23mediaviewer/File:G_D-EG-Caire-Mus%C3%A9e061.JPG. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 2.5.
 - "New Kingdom of Egypt."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Kingdom_of_Egypt%23mediaviewer/File:S_F-E-CAMERON_EGYPT_2006_FEB_00671.JPG. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- Hatshepsut
 - "Hatshepsut." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hatshepsut>. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Women of Ancient Egypt." <http://www.ushistory.org/civ/3f.asp>. Ancient Civilizations CC BY-SA 4.0.
 - "640px-Il_tempio_di_Hatshepsut.jpeg."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hatshepsut#/media/File:Il_tempio_di_Hatshepsut.JPG. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.

- "320px-S_F-E-CAMERON_2006-10-EGYPT-WESTBANK-0153.jpeg."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hatshepsut#/media/File:S_F-E-CAMERON_2006-10-EGYPT-WESTBANK-0153.JPG. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
- "544px-Thutmose_III_and_Hatshepsut.jpg."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hatshepsut#/media/File:Thutmose_III_and_Hatshepsut.jpg. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
- "Hatshepsut.jpg."
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hatshepsut#/media/File:Hatshepsut.jpg>.
Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.

- The Third Intermediate Period

- "Twenty-first Dynasty of Egypt." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twenty-first_Dynasty_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
- "Twenty-fifth Dynasty of Egypt." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twenty-fifth_Dynasty_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
- "Third Intermediate Period of Egypt."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_Intermediate_Period_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
- "Twenty-fourth Dynasty of Egypt." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twenty-fourth_Dynasty_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
- "Amun." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amun>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
- "Twenty-third Dynasty of Egypt." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twenty-third_Dynasty_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
- "Twenty-second Dynasty of Egypt." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twenty-second_Dynasty_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
- "Third Intermediate Period of Egypt."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_Intermediate_Period%23mediaviewer/File:NubianPharoahs Wikipedia Public domain.

- The Decline of Ancient Egypt

- "Ancient Egypt."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egypt#Ptolemaic_Period. Wikipedia CC

BY 3.0.

- "Societal Collapse." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Societal_collapse. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
- "History of Ancient Egypt."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_ancient_Egypt.
- Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
- "History of Egypt." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.

4.5: Ancient Egyptian Society

4.5.1: Ancient Egyptian Religion

Ancient Egyptian religion lasted for more than 3,000 years, and consisted of a complex polytheism. The pharaoh's role was to sustain the gods in order to maintain order in the universe.

Learning Objective

- Describe the religious beliefs and practices of Ancient Egypt

Key Points

- The religion of Ancient Egypt lasted for more than 3,000 years, and was polytheistic, meaning there were a multitude of deities, who were believed to reside within and control the forces of nature.
- Formal religious practice centered on the pharaoh, or ruler, of Egypt, who was believed to be divine, and acted as intermediary between the people and the gods. His role was to sustain the gods so that they could maintain order in the universe.
- The Egyptian universe centered on Ma'at, which has several meanings in English, including truth, justice and order. It was fixed and eternal; without it the world would fall apart.
- The most important myth was of Osiris and Isis. The divine ruler Osiris was murdered by Set (god of chaos), then resurrected by his sister and wife Isis to conceive an heir, Horus. Osiris then became the ruler of the dead, while Horus eventually avenged his father and became king.
- Egyptians were very concerned about the fate of their souls after death. They believed ka (life-force) left the body upon death and needed to be fed. Ba, or personal spirituality, remained in the body. The goal was to unite ka and ba to create akh.
- Artistic depictions of gods were not literal representations, as their true nature was considered mysterious. However, symbolic imagery was used to indicate this nature.
- Temples were the state's method of sustaining the gods, since their physical

images were housed and cared for; temples were not a place for the average person to worship.

- Certain animals were worshipped and mummified as representatives of gods.
- Oracles were used by all classes.

Key Terms

- **Ma'at** - The Egyptian universe.
- **Heka** – The ability to use natural forces to create "magic."
- **Pantheon** – The core actors of a religion.
- **Polytheistic** – A religion with more than one worshipped god.
- **Ka** – The spiritual part of an individual human being or god that survived after death.
- **Duat** – The realm of the dead; residence of Osiris.
- **Ba** – The spiritual characteristics of an individual person that remained in the body after death. Ba could unite with the ka.
- **Akh** – The combination of the ka and ba living in the afterlife.

The religion of Ancient Egypt lasted for more than 3,000 years, and was polytheistic, meaning there were a multitude of deities, who were believed to reside within and control the forces of nature. Religious practices were deeply embedded in the lives of Egyptians, as they attempted to provide for their gods and win their favor. The complexity of the religion was evident as some deities existed in different manifestations and had multiple mythological roles. The pantheon included gods with major roles in the universe, minor deities (or "demons"), foreign gods, and sometimes humans, including deceased Pharaohs.

Formal religious practice centered on the pharaoh, or ruler, of Egypt, who was believed to be divine, and acted as intermediary between the people and the gods. His role was to sustain the gods so that they could maintain order in the universe, and the state spent its resources generously to build temples and provide for rituals. The pharaoh was associated with Horus (and later Amun) and seen as the son of Ra. Upon death, the pharaoh was fully deified, directly identified with Ra and associated with Osiris, the god of death and rebirth. However, individuals could appeal directly to the gods for personal purposes through

prayer or requests for magic; as the pharaoh's power declined, this personal form of practice became stronger. Popular religious practice also involved ceremonies around birth and naming. The people also invoked "magic" (called heka) to make things happen using natural forces.



Figure 56 This wall painting shows, from left to right, the gods Osiris, Anubis and Horus.

Cosmology

The Egyptian universe centered on Ma'at, which has several meanings in English, including truth, justice and order. It was fixed and eternal (without it the world would fall apart), and there were constant threats of disorder requiring society to work to maintain it. Inhabitants of the cosmos included the gods, the spirits of deceased humans, and living humans, the most important of which was the pharaoh. Humans should cooperate to achieve this, and gods should function in balance. Ma'at was renewed by periodic events, such as the annual Nile flood, which echoed the original creation. Most important of these was the daily journey of the sun god Ra.

Egyptians saw the earth as flat land (the god Geb), over which arched the sky (goddess Nut); they were separated by Shu, the god of air. Underneath the earth was a parallel underworld and undersky, and beyond the skies lay Nu, the chaos before creation. Duat was a mysterious area associated with death and rebirth, and each day Ra passed through Duat after traveling over the earth during the day.

Myths

Egyptian myths are mainly known from hymns, ritual and magical texts, funerary texts, and the writings of Greeks and Romans. The creation myth saw the world as emerging as a

dry space in the primordial ocean of chaos, marked by the first rising of Ra. Other forms of the myth saw the primordial god Atum transforming into the elements of the world, and the creative speech of the intellectual god Ptah.

The most important myth was of Osiris and Isis. The divine ruler Osiris was murdered by Set (god of chaos), then resurrected by his sister and wife Isis to conceive an heir, Horus. Osiris then became the ruler of the dead, while Horus eventually avenged his father and became king. This myth set the Pharaohs, and their succession, as orderliness against chaos.



Figure 57 In this artwork, the air god Shu is assisted by other gods in holding up Nut, the sky, as Geb, the earth, lies beneath.

The Afterlife

Egyptians were very concerned about the fate of their souls after death, and built tombs, created grave goods and gave offerings to preserve the bodies and spirits of the dead.

They believed humans possessed ka, or life-force, which left the body at death. To endure after death, the ka must continue to receive offerings of food; it could consume the spiritual essence of it. Humans also possessed a ba, a set of spiritual characteristics unique to each person, which remained in the body after death. Funeral rites were meant to release the ba so it could move, rejoin with the ka, and live on as an akh.

However, the ba returned to the body at night, so the body must be preserved.

Mummification involved elaborate embalming practices, and wrapping in cloth, along with various rites, including the Opening of the Mouth ceremony. Tombs were originally



Figure 58 In this section from the Book of the Dead for the scribe Hunefer, the Weighing of the Heart is shown.

mastabas (rectangular brick structures), and then pyramids.

However, this originally did not apply to the common person: they passed into a dark, bleak realm that was the opposite of life. Nobles did receive tombs and grave gifts from the pharaoh. Eventually, by about 2181 BCE, Egyptians began to believe every person had a ba and could access the afterlife. By the New Kingdom, the soul had to face dangers in the Duat before having a final judgment, called the Weighing of the Heart, where the gods compared the actions of the deceased while alive to Ma'at, to see if they were worthy. If so, the ka and ba were united into an akh, which then either traveled to the lush underworld, or traveled with Ra on his daily journey, or even returned to the world of the living to carry out magic.

Rise and Fall of Gods

Certain gods gained a primary status over time, and then fell as other gods overtook them. These included the sun god Ra, the creator god Amun, and the mother goddess Isis. There was even a period of time where Egypt was monotheistic, under Pharaoh Akhenaten, and his patron god Aten.

The Relationships of Deities

Just as the forces of nature had complex interrelationships, so did Egyptian deities. Minor deities might be linked, or deities might come together based on the meaning of numbers in Egyptian mythology (i.e., pairs represented duality). Deities might also be linked through syncretism, creating a composite deity.

Artistic Depictions of Gods

Artistic depictions of gods were not literal representations, since their true nature was considered mysterious. However, symbolic imagery was used to indicate this nature. An example was Anubis, a funerary god, who was shown as a jackal to counter its traditional meaning as a scavenger, and create protection for the mummy.

Temples

Temples were the state's method of sustaining the gods, as their physical images were housed and cared for; they were not a place for the average person to worship. They were both mortuary temples to serve deceased pharaohs and temples for patron gods. Starting as simple structures, they grew more elaborate, and were increasingly built from stone,

Boundless URL: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/catalog/boundlesscourses>

145



Edited 2018: Tillamook Bay Community College

with a common plan. Ritual duties were normally carried out by priests, or government officials serving in the role. In the New Kingdom, professional priesthood became common, and their wealth rivaled that of the pharaoh.

Rituals and Festivals

Aside from numerous temple rituals, including the morning offering ceremony and re-enactments of myths, there were coronation ceremonies and the sed festival, a renewal of the pharaoh's strength during his reign. The Opet Festival at Karnak involved a procession carrying the god's image to visit other significant sites.

Animal Worship

At many sites, Egyptians worshipped specific animals that they believed to be manifestations of deities. Examples include the Apis bull (of the god Ptah), and mummified cats and other animals.

Use of Oracles

Commoners and pharaohs asked questions of oracles, and answers could even be used during the New Kingdom to settle legal disputes. This might involve asking a question while a divine image was being carried, and interpreting movement, or drawing lots.

4.5.2: Ancient Egyptian Art

Ancient Egyptian art included painting, sculpture, pottery, glass work, and architecture. Many surviving art is related to tombs and monuments. Aside from the brief Amarna period, Egyptian art remained relatively unchanged for thousands of years.

Learning Objective

- Examine the development of Egyptian Art under the Old Kingdom

Key Points

- Ancient Egyptian art includes painting, sculpture, architecture, and other forms of art, such as drawings on papyrus, created between 3000 BCE and 100 CE.
- Most of this art was highly stylized and symbolic. Much of the surviving forms come from tombs and monuments, and thus have a focus on life after death and preservation of knowledge.

- Symbolism meant order, shown through the pharaoh's regalia, or through the use of certain colors.
- In Egyptian art, the size of a figure indicates its relative importance.
- Paintings were often done on stone, and portrayed pleasant scenes of the afterlife in tombs.
- Ancient Egyptians created both monumental and smaller sculptures, using the technique of sunk relief.
- Ka statues, which were meant to provide a resting place for the ka part of the soul, were often made of wood and placed in tombs.
- Faience was sintered-quartz ceramic with surface vitrification, used to create relatively cheap small objects in many colors. Glass was originally a luxury item but became more common, and was used to make small jars, for perfume and other liquids, to be placed in tombs. Carvings of vases, amulets, and images of deities and animals were made of steatite. Pottery was sometimes covered with enamel, particularly in the color blue.
- Papyrus was used for writing and painting, and was used to record every aspect of Egyptian life.
- Architects carefully planned buildings, aligning them with astronomically significant events, such as solstices and equinoxes. They used mainly sunbaked mud brick, limestone, sandstone, and granite.
- The Amarna period (1353-1336 BCE) represents an interruption in ancient Egyptian art style, subjects were represented more realistically, and scenes included portrayals of affection among the royal family.

Key Terms

- **Scarabs** – Ancient Egyptian gem cut in the form of a scarab beetle.
- **Faience** – Glazed ceramic ware.
- **Ushabti** – Ancient Egyptian funerary figure.
- **Ka** – The supposed spiritual part of an individual human being or god that survived after death, and could reside in a statue of the person.
- **Sunk relief** – Sculptural technique in which the outlines of modeled forms are incised in a plane surface beyond which the forms do not project.

- **Regalia** – The emblems or insignia of royalty.
- **Papyrus** – A material prepared in ancient Egypt from the stem of a water plant, used in sheets for writing or painting on.

Ancient Egyptian art includes painting, sculpture, architecture, and other forms of art, such as drawings on papyrus, created between 3000 BCE and 100 AD. Most of this art was highly stylized and symbolic. Many of the surviving forms come from tombs and monuments, and thus have a focus on life after death and preservation of knowledge.

Symbolism

Symbolism in ancient Egyptian art conveyed a sense of order and the influence of natural elements. The regalia of the pharaoh symbolized his or her power to rule and maintain the order of the universe. Blue and gold indicated divinity because they were rare and were associated with precious materials, while black expressed the fertility of the Nile River.

Hierarchical Scale

In Egyptian art, the size of a figure indicates its relative importance. This meant gods or the pharaoh were usually bigger than other figures, followed by figures of high officials or the tomb owner; the smallest figures were servants, entertainers, animals, trees and architectural details.

Painting

Before painting a stone surface, it was whitewashed and sometimes covered with mud plaster. Pigments were made of mineral and able to stand up to strong sunlight with minimal fade. The binding medium is unknown; the paint was applied

to dried plaster in the "fresco a secco" style. A varnish or resin was then applied as a



Figure 59 In this wall painting of Nefertari, the side view is apparent.

protective coating, which, along with the dry climate of Egypt, protected the painting very well. The purpose of tomb paintings was to create a pleasant afterlife for the dead person, with themes such as journeying through the afterworld, or deities providing protection. The side view of the person or animal was generally shown, and paintings were often done in red, blue, green, gold, black and yellow.

Sculpture

Ancient Egyptians created both monumental and smaller sculptures, using the technique of sunk relief. In this technique, the image is made by cutting the relief sculpture into a flat surface, set within a sunken area shaped around the image. In strong sunlight, this technique is very visible, emphasizing the outlines and forms by shadow. Figures are



Figure 60 The ka statue was placed in the tomb to provide a physical place for the ka to manifest. This statue is found at the Egyptian Museum of Cairo.

shown with the torso facing front, the head in side view, and the legs parted, with males sometimes darker than females. Large statues of deities (other than the pharaoh) were not common, although deities were often shown in paintings and reliefs.

Colossal sculpture on the scale of the Great Sphinx of Giza was not repeated, but smaller sphinxes and animals were found in temple complexes. The most sacred cult image of a temple's god was supposedly held in the naos in small boats, carved out of precious metal, but none have survived.

Ka statues, which were meant to provide a resting place for the ka part of the soul, were present in tombs as of Dynasty IV (2680-2565 BCE). These were often made of wood, and were called reserve heads, which were plain,

hairless and naturalistic. Early tombs had small models of slaves, animals, buildings, and objects to provide life for the deceased in the afterworld. Later, ushabti figures were

present as funerary figures to act as servants for the deceased, should he or she be called upon to do manual labor in the afterlife.

Many small carved objects have been discovered, from toys to utensils, and alabaster was used for the more expensive objects. In creating any statuary, strict conventions, accompanied by a rating system, were followed. This resulted in a rather timeless quality, as few changes were instituted over thousands of years.

Faience, Pottery, and Glass

Faience was sintered-quartz ceramic with surface vitrification used to create relatively cheap, small objects in many colors, but most commonly blue-green. It was often used for jewelry, scarabs, and figurines. Glass was originally a luxury item, but became more common, and was used to make small jars, of perfume and other liquids, to be placed in tombs. Carvings of vases, amulets, and images of deities and animals were made of steatite. Pottery was sometimes covered with enamel, particularly in the color blue. In tombs, pottery was used to represent organs of the body removed during embalming, or to create cones, about ten inches tall, engraved with legends of the deceased.

Papyrus

Papyrus is very delicate and was used for writing and painting; it has only survived for long periods when buried in tombs. Every aspect of Egyptian life is found recorded on papyrus, from literary to administrative documents.

Architecture

Architects carefully planned buildings, aligning them with astronomically significant events, such as solstices and equinoxes, and used mainly sunbaked mud brick, limestone, sandstone, and granite. Stone was reserved for tombs and temples, while other buildings, such as palaces and fortresses, were made of bricks. Houses were made of mud from



Figure 61 The Pyramid of Khufu (Great Pyramid) is the largest of the pyramids pictured here.

the Nile River that hardened in the sun. Many of these houses were destroyed in flooding

or dismantled; examples of preserved structures include the village Deir al-Madinah and the fortress at Buhen.

The Giza Necropolis, built in the Fourth Dynasty, includes the Pyramid of Khufu (also known as the Great Pyramid or the Pyramid of Cheops), the Pyramid of Khafre, and the Pyramid of Menkaure, along with smaller "queen" pyramids and the Great Sphinx.



Figure 62 Shown here is the hypostyle hall of the Temple of Karnak.

The Temple of Karnak was first built in the 16th century BCE. About 30 pharaohs contributed to the buildings, creating an extremely large and diverse complex. It includes the Precincts of Amon-Re, Montu and Mut, and the Temple of Amehotep IV (dismantled).

The Luxor Temple was constructed in the 14th century BCE by Amenhotep III in the ancient city of Thebes, now Luxor, with a major expansion by Ramesses II in the 13th century BCE. It includes the 79- foot high First Pylon, friezes, statues, and columns.

The Amarna Period (1353-1336 BCE)

During this period, which represents an interruption in ancient Egyptian art style, subjects were represented more realistically,

and scenes included portrayals of affection among the royal family. There was a sense of movement in the images, with overlapping figures and large crowds. The style reflects Akhenaten's move to monotheism, but it disappeared after his death.

4.5.3: Ancient Egyptian Monuments

Ancient Egyptian monuments included pyramids, sphinxes, and temples. These buildings and statues required careful planning and resources, and showed the influence Egyptian

religion had on the state and its people.

Learning Objective

- Describe the impressive attributes of the monuments erected by Egyptians in the Old Kingdom

Key Points

- Ancient Egyptian architects carefully planned buildings, aligning them with astronomically significant events, such as solstices and equinoxes, and used mainly sunbaked mud brick, limestone, sandstone, and granite.
- Egyptian pyramids were highly reflective, referenced the sun, and were usually placed on the West side of the Nile River.
- About 135 pyramids have been discovered in Egypt, with the largest (in Egypt and the world) being the Great Pyramid of Giza.
- The Great Sphinx of Giza is a reclining sphinx (a mythical creature with a lion's body and a human head); its face is meant to represent the Pharaoh Khafra. It is the world's oldest and largest monolith.
- Egyptian temples were used for official, formal worship of the gods by the state, and to commemorate pharaohs. The temple was the house of a particular god, and Egyptians would perform rituals, give offerings, re-enact myths, and keep order in the universe (ma'at).
- The Temple of Karnak was first built in the 16th century BCE. About 30 pharaohs contributed to the buildings, creating an extremely large and diverse complex.
- The Luxor Temple was constructed in the 14th century BCE by Amenhotep III in the ancient city of Thebes, now Luxor. It later received a major expansion by Ramesses II in the 13th century BCE.

Key Terms

- **Monolith** – A large single upright block of stone, especially one shaped into, or serving as, a pillar or monument.
- **Friezes** – Broad, horizontal bands of sculpted or painted decoration.
- **Pylon** – In ancient Egypt, two tapering towers with a less elevated section between them, forming a gateway.

- **Peristyle courts** – In ancient Egypt, courts that open to the sky.
- **Hypostyle halls** – In ancient Egypt, covered rooms with columns.
- **Equinoxes** – Either of the two times in the year when the sun crosses the celestial equator, and day and night are of equal length.
- **Solstices** – Either of the two times in the year (summer and winter) when the sun reaches its highest or lowest point in the sky at noon.
- **Ma'at** – The ancient Egyptian concept of truth, balance, order, harmony, law, morality and justice.
- **Obelisks** – Stone pillars, typically having a square or rectangular cross section and pyramidal top, used as monuments or landmarks.

Ancient Egyptian architects carefully planned buildings, aligning them with astronomically significant events, such as solstices and equinoxes. They used mainly sunbaked mud brick, limestone, sandstone, and granite. Stone was reserved for tombs and temples, while other buildings, such as palaces and fortresses, were made of bricks.

Pyramids

Egyptian pyramids referenced the rays of the sun, and appeared highly polished and reflective, with a capstone that was generally a hard stone like granite, sometimes plated with gold, silver or electrum. Most were placed west of the Nile, to allow the pharaoh's soul to join with the sun during its descent.

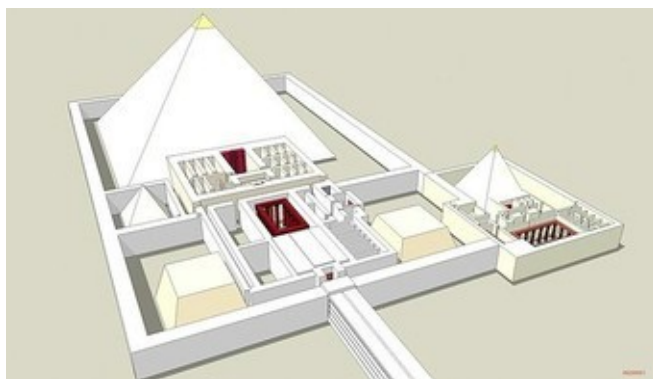


Figure 63 Old Kingdom Pyramid Temple Reconstruction.

About 135 pyramids have been discovered in Egypt, with the largest (in Egypt and the world) being the Great Pyramid of Giza. Its base is over 566,000 square feet in area, and was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. The Giza Necropolis, built in the Fourth Dynasty, includes the Pyramid of Khufu (also known as the

Great Pyramid or the Pyramid of Cheops), the Pyramid of Khafre and the Pyramid of Menkaure, along with smaller "queens" pyramids and the Great Sphinx.

The Great Sphinx of Giza

This limestone statue of a reclining sphinx (a mythical creature with a lion's body and a human head) is located on the Giza Plateau to the west of the Nile. It is believed the face is meant to represent the Pharaoh Khafra. It is the largest and oldest monolith statue in the world, at 241 feet long, 63 feet wide, and 66.34 feet tall. It is believed to have been built during the reign of Pharaoh Khafra (2558-2532 BCE). It was probably a focus of solar worship, as the lion is a symbol associated with the sun.

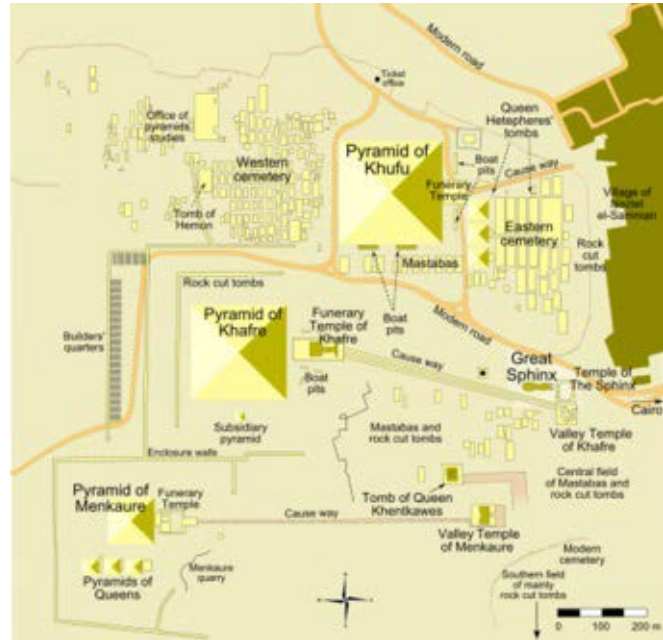


Figure 64 Map of Giza Pyramid Complex



Figure 65 The Great Sphinx of Giza.

Temples

Egyptian temples were used for official, formal worship of the gods by the state, and to commemorate pharaohs. The temple was the house dedicated to a particular god, and Egyptians would perform rituals there, give offerings, re-enact myths and keep order in the universe (ma'at). Pharaohs were in charge of caring for the gods, and they dedicated massive resources to this task. Priests

assisted in this effort. The average citizen was not allowed into the inner sanctum of the temple, but might still go there to pray, give offerings, or ask questions of the gods.

The inner sanctuary had a cult image of the temple's god, as well as a series of surrounding rooms that became large and elaborate over time, evolving into massive stone edifices during the New Kingdom. Temples also often owned surrounding land and

employed thousands of people to support its activities, creating a powerful institution. The designs emphasized order, symmetry and monumentality. Hypostyle halls (covered rooms filled with columns) led to peristyle courts (open courts), where the public could meet with priests. At the front of each court was a pylon (broad, flat towers) that held flagpoles. Outside the temple building was the temple enclosure, with a brick wall to symbolically protect from outside disorder; often a sacred lake would be found here. Decoration included reliefs (bas relief and sunken relief) of images and hieroglyphic text and sculpture, including obelisks, figures of gods (sometimes in sphinx form), and votive figures. Egyptian religions faced persecution by Christians, and the last temple was closed in 550 AD.



Figure 66 Temple of Karnak.



Figure 67 Shown here is the entrance pylon of Luxor Temple, one of the major New Kingdom temples.

The Temple of Karnak was first built in the 16th century BCE. About 30 pharaohs contributed to the buildings, creating an extremely large and diverse complex. It includes the Precincts of Amon-Re, Montu and Mut, and the Temple of Amehotep IV (dismantled).

The Luxor Temple was constructed in the 14th century BCE by Amenhotep III in the ancient city of Thebes, now Luxor, with a major expansion by Ramesses II in the 13th century BCE. It includes the 79-foot high First Pylon, friezes, statues, and columns.

4.5.4: Ancient Egyptian Trade

Ancient Egyptians traded with their African and Mediterranean neighbors to obtain goods, such as cedar, lapis lazuli, gold, ivory, and more. They exported goods, such as papyrus,

linen, and finished objects using a variety of land and maritime trading routes.

Learning Objective

- Describe the economic structure of ancient Egypt

Key Points

- Trade was occurring in the 5th century BCE onwards, especially with Canaan, Lebanon, Nubia and Punt.
- Just before the First Dynasty, Egypt had a colony in southern Canaan that produced Egyptian pottery for export to Egypt.
- In the Second Dynasty, Byblos provided quality timber that could not be found in Egypt.
- By the Fifth Dynasty, trade with Punt gave Egyptians gold, aromatic resins, ebony, ivory, and wild animals.
- A well-traveled land route from the Nile to the Red Sea crossed through the Wadi Hammamat. Another route, the Darb el-Arbain, was used from the time of the Old Kingdom of Egypt.
- Egyptians built ships as early as 3000 BCE by lashing planks of wood together and stuffing the gaps with reeds. They used them to import goods from Lebanon and Punt.

Key Terms

- **Papyrus** – A material prepared in ancient Egypt from the stem of a water plant, used in sheets for writing, painting, or making rope, sandals, and boats.
- **Obsidian** – A hard, dark, glasslike volcanic rock.
- **Electrum** – A natural or artificial alloy of gold, with at least 20% silver, used for jewelry.
- **Myrrh** – A fragrant gum resin obtained from certain trees, often used in perfumery, medicine and incense.
- **Malachite** – A bright green mineral consisting of copper hydroxyl carbonate.

Early examples of ancient Egyptian trade included contact with Syria in the 5th century BCE, and importation of pottery and construction ideas from Canaan in the 4th century

BCE. By this time, shipping was common, and the donkey, camel, and horse were domesticated and used for transportation. Lebanese cedar has been found in the tombs of Nekhen, dated to the Naqada I and II periods. Egyptians during this period also imported obsidian from Ethiopia, gold and incense from Nubia in the south, oil jugs from Palestine, and other goods from the oases of the western desert and the cultures of the eastern Mediterranean. Egyptian artifacts from this era have been found in Canaan and parts of



Figure 68 Depiction of Queen Hatshepsut's Expedition to Punt.

the former Mesopotamia. In the latter half of the 4th century BCE, the gemstone lapis lazuli was being imported from Badakhshan (modern-day Afghanistan).

Just before the First Dynasty, Egypt had a colony in southern Canaan that produced Egyptian pottery for export to Egypt. In the Second Dynasty, Byblos provided quality timber that could not be

found in Egypt. By the Fifth Dynasty, trade with Punt gave Egyptians gold, aromatic resins, ebony, ivory, and wild animals. Egypt also traded with Anatolia for tin and copper in order to make bronze. Mediterranean trading partners provided olive oil and other fine goods. Egypt commonly exported grain, gold, linen, papyrus, and finished goods, such as glass and stone objects.

Land Trade Routes

A well-traveled land route from the Nile to the Red Sea crossed through the Wadi Hammamat, and was known from predynastic times. This route allowed travelers to move from Thebes to the Red Sea port of Elim, and led to the rise of ancient cities.



Figure 69 This painting depicts an Egyptian ship from c. 1420 BCE.

Another route, the Darb el-Arbain, was used from the time of the Old Kingdom of Egypt to trade gold, ivory, spices, wheat,

animals, and plants. This route passed through Kharga in the south and Asyut in the north, and was a major route between Nubia and Egypt.

Maritime Trade Routes

Egyptians built ships as early as 3000 BCE by lashing planks of wood together and stuffing the gaps with reeds.

Pharaoh Sahure, of the Fifth Dynasty, is known to have sent ships to Lebanon to import cedar, and to the Land of Punt for myrrh, malachite, and electrum. Queen Hatshepsut sent ships for myrrh in Punt, and extended Egyptian trade into modern-day Somalia and the Mediterranean.

An ancient form of the Suez Canal is believed to have been started by Pharaoh Senusret II or III of the Twelfth Dynasty, in order to connect the Nile River with the Red Sea.



Figure 70 Queen Hatshepsut expanded trade into modern-day Somalia and the Mediterranean.

4.5.5: Ancient Egyptian Culture

The Middle Kingdom was a golden age for ancient Egypt, when arts, religion, and literature flourished. Two major innovations of the time were block statues and new forms of literature.

Learning Objective

- Examine the artistic and social developments of the Middle Kingdom

Key Points

- The Middle Kingdom (2134-1690 BCE) was a time of prosperity and stability, as well as a resurgence of art, literature, and architecture. Block statue was a new type of sculpture invented in the Middle Kingdom, and was often used as a funerary monument.
- Literature had new uses during the Middle Kingdom, and many classics were written during the period.

Key Term

- **Funerary monuments** – Sculpture meant to decorate a tomb within a pyramid.

The Middle Kingdom (2134-1690 BCE) was a time of prosperity and stability, as well as a resurgence of art, literature, and architecture. Two major innovations of the time were the block statue and new forms of literature.

The Block Statue

The block statue came into use during this period. This type of sculpture depicts a squatting man with knees drawn close to the chest and arms folded on top of the knees. The body may be adorned with a cloak, which makes the body appear to be a block shape. The feet may be covered by the cloak, or left uncovered. The head was often carved in great detail, and reflected Egyptian beauty ideals, including large ears and small breasts. The block statue became more popular over the years, with its high point in the Late Period, and was often used as funerary monuments of important, non-royal individuals. They may have been intended as guardians, and were often fully inscribed.

Literature

In the Middle Kingdom period, due to growth of middle class and scribes, literature began to be written to entertain and provide intellectual stimulation. Previously, literature served the purposes of maintaining divine cults, preserving souls in the afterlife, and documenting practical activities. However, some Middle Kingdom literature may have been transcriptions of the oral literature and poetry of the Old Kingdom. Future generations of Egyptians often considered Middle Kingdom literature to be "classic," with the ultimate example being the



Figure 71 An example of a block statue from the Late Period, c. 650-633 BCE.

Story of Sinuhe.

Attributions

- Ancient Egyptian Religion
 - "Egyptian Religion." <http://anthropology.msu.edu/anp455-fs12/2012/10/11/egyptian-religion/>. Archaeology of Ancient Egypt CC BY 4.0.
 - "Ancient Egyptian Religion." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egyptian_religion. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Egyptian Social Structure." <http://www.ushistory.org/civ/3b.asp>. Ancient Civilizations CC BY-SA 4.0.
 - "BD_Hunefer_cropped_1.jpg." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egyptian_religion#/media/File:BD_Hunefer_cropped_1. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "640px-Geb_Nut_Shu.jpg." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egyptian_religion#/media/File:Geb,_Nut,_Shu.jpg. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "347px-La_Tombe_de_Horemheb_cropped.jpg." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egyptian_religion#/media/File:La_Tombe_de_Horemhe Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
- Ancient Egyptian Art
 - "Ancient Egyptian Architecture." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egyptian_architecture. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Egyptian Faience." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egyptian_faience. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Art of Ancient Egypt." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Art_of_ancient_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Ushabti." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ushabti>. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Amarna." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amarna>. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Sunk Relief." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Relief#Sunk_relief. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.

- "312px-Hypostyle_hall_Karnak_temple.jpg."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egyptian_architecture#/media/File:Hypostyle_hall,_Karnak Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
- "323px-Ka_Statue_of_horawibra.jpg."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Art_of_ancient_Egypt#/media/File:Ka_Statue_of_horawibra.jpg. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
- "640px-All_Gizah_Pyramids.jpg."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egyptian_architecture#/media/File:All_Gizah_Pyramids Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
- "326px-Maler_der_Grabkammer_der_Nefertari_004.jpg."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Art_of_ancient_Egypt#/media/File:Maler_der_Grabkammer_der_Nefertari_004.jpg Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
- Ancient Egyptian Monuments
 - "Great Sphinx of Giza." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Sphinx_of_Giza. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Great Pyramid of Giza."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Pyramid_of_Giza. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Pyramid." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyramid>. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Egyptian Temple." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egyptian_temple. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "491px-Giza_pyramid_complex_map.svg.png."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Pyramid_of_Giza#/media/File:Giza_pyramid_complex_map.svg.png Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "640px-Egypt.Giza.Sphinx.02.jpg."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Sphinx_of_Giza#/media/File:Egypt.Giza.Sphinx.02.jpg. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "640px-Karnak-Hypostyle3.jpg."
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karnak#/media/File:Karnak-Hypostyle3.jpg>. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "640px-Luxor07js.jpg."
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egyptian_temple#/media/File:Luxor07\(js\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egyptian_temple#/media/File:Luxor07(js).jpg). Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.

- "640px-Pyramide_Djedkare_Isesi_3.jpg."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egyptian_temple#/media/File:Pyramide_Djedkare_Isesi_3.jpg. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
- Ancient Egyptian Trade
 - "Ancient Egypt." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "History of Ancient Egypt."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_ancient_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Ancient Egyptian Trade."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egyptian_trade. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Hatshepsut.jpg."
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hatshepsut#/media/File:Hatshepsut.jpg>.
 Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "640px-Maler_der_Grabkammer_des_Menna_013.jpg."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_maritime_history#/media/File:Maler_der_Grabkammer_013.jpg. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "640px-Relief_of_Hatshepsut's_expedition_to_the_Land_of_Punt_by_Σταύρος.jpg."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Land_of_Punt#/media/File:Relief_of_Hatshepsut's_expedition_to_the_Land_of_Punt_by_Σταύρος.jpg. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
- Ancient Egyptian Culture
 - "Middle Kingdom of Egypt."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_Kingdom_of_Egypt#Art. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Ancient Egypt."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egypt#Middle_Kingdom_282134.E2.80.931690_BC.29. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Block Statue." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Block_statue. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "286px-Block_statue_Pa-Akh-Ra_CdM.jpg."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Block_statue#/media/File:Block_statue_Pa-Akh-Ra_CdM.jpg. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.

4.6: Nubia and Ancient Egypt

4.6.1: Nubia and Ancient Culture

Nubia was a region along the Nile River. Its history can be traced from c. 2000 BCE to modern day. It was culturally close to ancient Egypt, and the two regions had periods of both peace and war.

Learning Objective

- Describe the Nubian kingdoms, emphasizing their relationship with Egypt

Key Points

- Nubia consisted of two major regions along the Nile River, from Aswan to Khartoum.
- Nubian history can be traced from c. 2000 BCE onward to 1504 AD, when Nubia was divided between Egypt and the Sennar sultanate and became Arabized.
- Nubia and Ancient Egypt had periods of both peace and war.
- Around 3500 BCE, the "A-Group" of Nubians arose, existing side-by-side with the Naqada of Upper Egypt.
- Nubia was first mentioned by ancient Egyptian trading accounts in 2300 BCE.
- During the Egyptian Middle Kingdom (c. 2040-1640 BCE), Egypt began expanding into Nubian territory in order to control trade routes, and to build a series of forts along the Nile.
- The "Medjay" were people from the Nubia region who worked in the Egyptian military.
- Some Egyptian pharaohs were of Nubian origin, especially during the Kushite Period, although they closely followed the usual Egyptian methods of governing.

Key Term

- **Pharaoh** – A ruler in ancient Egypt.

Nubia consisted of two major regions along the Nile River, from Aswan to Khartoum.

Upper Nubia sat between the Second and Sixth Cataracts of the Nile (modern-day central Sudan), and Lower Nubia sat between the First and Second Cataracts (modern-day

southern Egypt and northern Sudan).

Nubian history can be traced from c. 2000 BCE onward to 1504 AD, when Nubia was divided between Egypt and the Sennar sultanate and became Arabized. It was later united within the Ottoman Egypt in the 19th century, and the Kingdom of Egypt from 1899 to 1956.

Nubia and Egypt

Nubia and Ancient Egypt had periods of both peace and war. It is believed, based on rock art, that Nubian rulers and early Egyptian pharaohs used similar royal symbols. There was often peaceful cultural exchange and cooperation, and marriages between the two did occur. Egyptians did, however, conquer Nubian territory at various times. Nubians conquered Egypt in the 25th Dynasty.

Egyptians called the Nubian region "Ta-Seti," which means "The Land of the Bow," a reference to Nubian archery skills. Around 3500 BCE, the "A-Group" of Nubians arose, existing side-by-side with the

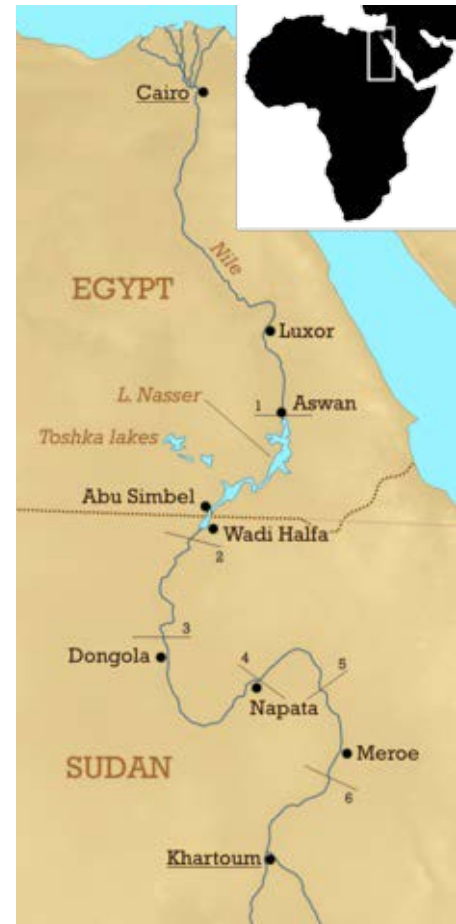


Figure 72 This map shows the modern-day location of Nubia.



Figure 73 Depiction of Nubians Worshipping.

Naqada of Upper Egypt. These two groups traded gold, copper tools, faience, stone vessels, pots, and more. Egyptian unification in 3300 BCE may have been helped along by Nubian culture, which was conquered by Upper Egypt.

Nubia was first mentioned by ancient Egyptian trading accounts in 2300 BCE. Nubia was a gateway to the riches of Africa, and goods like gold, incense,

ebony, copper, ivory, and animals flowed through it. By the Sixth Dynasty, Nubia was fractured into a group of small kingdoms; the population (called "C-Group") may have been made up of Saharan nomads.

During the Egyptian Middle Kingdom (c. 2040-1640 BCE), Egypt began expanding into Nubian territory in order to control trade routes, and to build a series of forts along the Nile.

The Egyptians called a certain region of northern modern-day Sudan, where ancient Nubians lived, "Medjay." This name gradually began to reference people, not the region. Those who lived in this region worked in the Egyptian military as scouts, later as garrison troops, and finally as elite paramilitary police.



Figure 74 Depiction of Battle with the Nubians.

Some Egyptian pharaohs were of Nubian origin, especially during the Kushite Period, although they closely followed the usual Egyptian methods of governing. In fact, they were seen, and saw themselves, as culturally Egyptian. The two cultures were so close that some scholars see them as indistinguishable. Nubians appear to have been assimilated into Egyptian culture.

Attributions

- Nubia and Ancient Culture
 - "Lower Nubia." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lower_Nubia. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "Nubia." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nubia#Nubia_and_Ancient_Egypt. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "The Egyptian and Nubian Empires." <http://cdaworldhistory.wikidot.com/the-egyptian-and-nubian-empires>. CDA's World History Wiki CC BY 3.0.
 - "NubianMuseum.jpg." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nubia#/media/File:NubianMuseum.jpg>. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
 - "640px-Ramses_II_charging_Nubians.jpg."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nubia#/media/File:Ramses_II_charging_Nubians.jpg. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.

- "230px-Nubia_today.png."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nubia#/media/File:Nubia_today.png. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.

5: Ancient Greece and the Hellenistic World

5.1: Early Periods in Greek History

5.1.1: Greek Dark Ages

The Greek Dark Ages were ushered in by a period of violence, and characterized by the disruption of Greek cultural progress.

Learning Objective

- Understand the characteristics of the Greek Dark Ages

Key Points

- The Late Bronze Age collapse, also known as the Age of Calamities, was a transition in the Aegean Region, Eastern Mediterranean, and Southwestern Asia. It took place from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age. Historians believe this period was violent, sudden, and culturally disruptive.
- Many historians attribute the fall of the Mycenaeans, and overall Bronze Age collapse, to climatic or environmental catastrophe combined with an invasion by the Dorians (or Sea Peoples).
- During the Dark Ages, Greece was most likely divided into independent regions according to kinship groups, and the oikoi, or households.
- Toward the end of the Greek Dark Ages, communities began to develop that were governed by elite groups of aristocrats, as opposed to singular kings or chieftains of earlier periods. Additionally, trade with other communities in the Mediterranean and the Levant began to strengthen, based upon findings from archaeological sites.

Key Terms

- **Oikoi** – The basic unit of society in most Greek city-states. In some usage, it refers to the line of descent from a father to a son throughout generations. Alternatively, it

can refer to everybody living in a given house.

- **Linear B** – Syllabic script that was used for writing Mycenaean Greek, the earliest documented form of the Greek language.
- **Palace economy** – A system of economic organization in which a substantial share of wealth flows into the control of a centralized administration (i.e., the palace), and then outward to the general population.

Age of Calamities

The Late Bronze Age collapse, or Age of Calamities, was a transition in the Aegean Region, Eastern Mediterranean, and Southwestern Asia that took place from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age. Historians believe this period was violent, sudden, and culturally disruptive. The palace economy of the Aegean Region that had characterized the Late Bronze Age, was replaced, after a hiatus, by the isolated village cultures of the Greek Dark Ages—a period that lasted for more than 400 years. Cities like Athens continued to be occupied, but with a more local sphere of influence, limited evidence of trade, and an impoverished culture, which took centuries to recover.

Fall of the Mycenaeans

Many historians attribute the fall of the Mycenaeans, and overall Bronze Age collapse, to climatic or environmental catastrophe, combined with an invasion by the Dorians or Sea Peoples—a group of people who possibly originated from different parts of the Mediterranean like the Black Sea, though their origins remain obscure. Historians also point to the widespread availability of edged iron weapons as an exasperating factor. Despite this, no single explanation fits all available archaeological evidence in explaining the fall of the Mycenaean culture.

Many large-scale revolts took place in several parts of the eastern Mediterranean during this time, and attempts to overthrow existing kingdoms were made as a result of economic and political instability by peoples already plagued with famine and hardship. Some regions in Greece, such as Attica, Euboea, and central Crete, recovered economically quicker from these events than other regions, but life for the poorest Greeks would have remained relatively unchanged. Farming, weaving, metalworking, and potting continued at lower levels of output and for local use. Some technical innovations were introduced

around 1050 BCE with the start of the Proto-geometric style. However, the overall trend was toward simpler, less intricate pieces with fewer resources being devoted to the creation of art.

None of the Mycenaean palaces of the Late Bronze Age survived, with the possible exception of the Cyclopean fortifications on the Acropolis of Athens. The archaeological record shows that destruction was heaviest at palaces and fortified sites. Up to 90% of small sites in the Peloponnese were abandoned, suggesting major depopulation. The Linear B writing of the Greek language used by Mycenaean bureaucrats ceased, and decorations on Greek pottery after about 1100 BCE lacks the figurative decoration of the Mycenaeans, and was restricted to simpler geometric styles.

Society During the Greek Dark Ages

Greece was most likely divided into independent regions according to kinship groups and the oikoi, or households. Excavations of Dark Age communities, such as Nichoria in the Peloponnese, have shown how a Bronze Age town was abandoned in 1150 BCE, but then reemerged as a small village cluster by 1075 BCE. Archaeological evidence suggests that only 40 families lived in Nichoria and that there was abundant farming and grazing land. Some remains appear to have been the living quarters of a chieftain. High status individuals did exist during the Dark Ages; however, their standards of living were not significantly higher than others in their village.

By the mid- to late 8th century BCE, a new alphabet system was adopted by the Greek, and borrowed from the Phoenician writing system. This writing system introduced characters for vowel sounds, creating the first truly alphabetic (as opposed to abjad) writing system. The new system of writing spread throughout the Mediterranean, and was used not only to write in Greek, but also Phrygian and other languages.

It was previously believed that all contact had been lost between mainland Hellenes and foreign powers during this period; however, artifacts from excavations at Lefkandi in Euboea show that significant cultural and trade links with the east, especially the Levant coast, developed from approximately 900 BCE onward. Evidence has also emerged of a Hellenic presence in sub-Mycenaean Cyprus, and on the Syrian coast at Al Mina. The archaeological record of many sites demonstrates that the economic recovery of Greece

was well advanced by the beginning of the 8th century BCE. Many burial sites contained offerings from the Near East, Egypt, and Italy. The decoration of pottery also became more elaborate, featuring figured scenes that parallel the stories of Homeric tradition. Iron tools and weapons also became better in quality, and communities began to develop that were governed by elite groups of aristocrats, as opposed to singular kings or chieftains of earlier periods.

5.1.2: Archaic Greece

The Archaic Period saw the increasing urbanization of Greek communities, and the development of the concept of the *polis*.

Learning Objective

- Understand the changes to Greek society during the Archaic Period

Key Points

- The Archaic period saw significant urbanization, and the development of the concept of the polis, as it was used in classical Greece.
- Archaic Greece, from the mid-seventh century onward, has been referred to as an "age of tyrants."
- The Homeric Question concerns the doubts and consequent debate over the historicity of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, as well as the identity of their author, Homer.

Key Terms

- **Synoeicism** – The amalgamation of several small settlements into a single urban center.
- **Polis** – The literal translation of this word from Greek is "city." It typically refers to the Greek city-states of the Archaic and Classical periods.

Archaic Greece

The Archaic period of Greek history lasted from the 8th century BCE to the second Persian invasion of Greece in 480 BCE. The period began with a massive increase in the Greek population and a structural revolution that established the Greek city-states, or polis. The Archaic period saw developments in Greek politics, economics, international relations,

Boundless URL: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/catalog/boundlesscourses>



Edited 2018: Tillamook Bay Community College

warfare, and culture. It also laid the groundwork for the classical period, both politically and culturally. During this time, the Greek alphabet developed, and the earliest surviving Greek literature was composed. Monumental sculpture and red-figure pottery also developed in Greece, and in Athens, the earliest institutions of democracy were implemented.

Some written accounts of life exist from this time period in the form of poetry, law codes, inscriptions on votive offerings, and epigrams inscribed on tombs. However, thorough written histories, such as those that exist from the Greek classical period, are lacking. Historians do have access to rich archaeological evidence from this period, however, that informs our understanding of Greek life during the Archaic period.



Figure 75 The Acropolis of Athens, a noted polis of classical Greece.

Development of the *Polis*

The Archaic period saw significant urbanization and the development of the concept of the polis as it was used in classical Greece. However, the polis did not become the dominant form of sociopolitical organization throughout Greece during the Archaic period, and in the north and west of the country it did not

become dominant until later in the classical period. The process of urbanization known as "synoecism" (or the amalgamation of several small settlements into a single urban center), took place in much of Greece during the 8th century. Both Athens and Argos, for example, coalesced into single settlements near the end of that century. In some settlements, physical unification was marked by the construction of defensive city walls. The increase in population, and evolution of the polis as a sociopolitical structure, necessitated a new form of political organization.

Age of Tyranny

Archaic Greece from the mid-7th century onward has been referred to as an "age of tyrants." Various explanations have been provided for the rise of tyranny in the 7th century. The most popular explanation dates back to Aristotle, who argued that tyrants were set up by the people in response to the nobility becoming less tolerable. Because there is no

evidence from this time period demonstrating this to be the case, historians have looked for alternate explanations. Some argue that tyrannies were set up by individuals who controlled private armies, and that early tyrants did not need the support of the people at all. Others suggest that tyrannies were established as a consequence of in-fighting between rival oligarchs, rather than as a result of fighting between oligarchs and the people.

Other historians question the existence of a 7th century "age of tyrants" altogether. In the Archaic period, the Greek word *tyrannos* did not have the negative connotations it had later in the classical period. Often the word could be used as synonymous with "king." As a result, many historians argue that Greek tyrants were not considered illegitimate rulers, and cannot be distinguished from any other rulers during the same period.

The Homeric Question

The Homeric Question concerns the doubts and consequent debate over the identity of Homer, the author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*; it also questions the historicity of the two books. Many scholars agree that regardless of who authored Homer's works, it is highly likely that the poems attributed to him were part of a generations-old oral tradition, with many scholars believing the works to be transcribed sometime in the 6th century BCE or earlier. Many estimates place the events of Homer's Trojan War as preceding the Greek Dark Ages, of approximately 1250 to 750 BCE. The *Iliad*, however, has been placed immediately following the Greek Dark Age period.

5.1.3: The Rise of Classical Greece

Classical Greece rose after the fall of the Athenian tyrants and the institution of Cleisthenes' democratic reforms, and lasted throughout the 5th and 4th centuries BCE.

Learning Objective

- Understand the significance of Cleisthenes' reforms to the rise of Classical Greece

Key Points

- The classical period followed the Archaic period, and was succeeded by the Hellenistic period.
- Much of modern Western politics, artistic and scientific thought, literature, and

philosophy derives from this period of Greek history.

- Through Cleisthenes' reforms, the people endowed their city with isonomic institutions, and established ostracism.
- A corpus of reforms made to Athenian political administration during this time led to the emergence of a wider democracy in the 460s and 450s BCE.

Key Terms

- **Classical Greece** – A 200 year period in Greek culture, lasting from the 5th through 4th centuries BCE.
- **Cleisthenes** – A noble Athenian of the Alcmaeonid family, credited with reforming the constitution of ancient Athens, and setting it on a democratic footing in 508/7 BCE.
- **Isonomic** – A word used by ancient Greek writers to refer to various kinds of popular government with the general goal of "equal rights."
- **Ostracism** – A procedure under Athenian democracy by which any citizen could be expelled from the city-state of Athens for ten years.
- **Trittyes** – Population divisions in ancient Attica, established by the reforms of Cleisthenes in 508 BCE.

Classical Greece was a 200-year period in Greek culture lasting from the 5th to the 4th centuries BCE. This period saw the annexation of much of modern-day Greece by the Persian Empire, as well as its subsequent independence. Classical Greece also had a powerful influence on the Roman Empire, and greatly influenced the foundations of Western civilization. Much of modern Western politics, artistic and scientific thought, literature, and philosophy derives from this period of Greek history. The classical period was preceded by the Archaic period, and was succeeded by the Hellenistic period.

Rise of the City-States

The term "city-state," which is English in origin, does not fully translate the Greek term for these same entities, polis. Poleis were different from ancient city-states in that they were ruled by bodies of the citizens who lived there. Many were initially established, as in Sparta, via a network of villages, with a governance center being established in a central urban center. As notions of citizenship rose to prominence among landowners, polis came

to embody an entire body of citizens and the term could be used to describe the populace of a place, rather than the physical location itself. Basic elements of a polis often included the following:

- Self-governance, autonomy, and independence
- A social hub and financial marketplace, called an agora
- Urban planning and architecture
- Temples, altars, and other sacred precincts, many of which would be dedicated to the patron deity of the city
- Public spaces, such as gymnasia and theaters
- Defensive walls to protect against invasion
- Coinage minted by the city

Polis were established and expanded by synoecism, or the absorption of nearby villages and tribes. Most cities were composed of several tribes that were in turn composed of groups sharing common ancestry, and their extended families. Territory was a less helpful means of thinking about the shape of a polis than regions of shared religious and political associations.

Dwellers of a polis were typically divided into four separate social classes, with an individual's status usually being determined at birth. Free adult men born of legitimate citizens were considered citizens with full legal and political rights, including the right to vote, be elected into office, and bear arms, with the obligation to serve in the army during wartime. The female relatives and underage children of full citizens were also considered citizens, but they had no formal political rights. They were typically represented within society by their adult male relatives. Citizens of other poleis who chose to reside in a different polis possessed full rights in their place of origin, but had no political rights in their new place of residence. Otherwise, such citizens had full personal and property rights subject to taxation. Finally, slaves were considered possessions of their owner and had no rights or privileges other than those granted by their owner.

Greco-Persian Wars

The Greco-Persian Wars, also referred to as the Persian Wars, were a series of conflicts

that began in 499 BCE and lasted until 449 BCE, between the Achaemenid Empire of Persia (modern-day Iran) and Greek city-states. The conflict began when Cyrus the Great conquered the Greek-inhabited region of Ionia in 547 BCE. After struggling to control the cities of Ionia, the Persians appointed tyrants to rule each of them. When the tyrant of Miletus embarked on an unsuccessful expedition to conquer the island of Naxos with Persian support, however, a rebellion was incited throughout Hellenic Asia Minor against the Persians. This rebellion, known as the Ionian Revolt, lasted until 493 BCE, and drew increasingly more regions throughout Asia Minor into the conflict.

Eventually the Ionians suffered a decisive defeat and the rebellion collapsed.

Subsequently, Darius the Great, the Persian ruler, sought to secure his empire from further revolts and interference from the mainland Greeks, and embarked upon a scheme to conquer all of Greece. The first Persian invasion of Greece began in 492 BCE, and was successful in conquering Macedon and re-subjugating Thrace. In 490 BCE, a second force was sent to Greece across the Aegean Sea, successfully subjugating the Cyclades. However, the Persians were defeated by the Athenians at the Battle of Marathon, putting a halt to Darius's plan until his death in 486 BCE.

In 480 BCE, Darius's son, Xerxes, personally led the second Persian invasion of Greece with one of the largest ancient armies ever assembled. His invasion was successful and Athens was burned. However, the following year, the Allied Greek states went on the offensive, defeating the Persian army at the Battle of Plataea and ending the invasion of Greece. The Greeks continued to expel Persian forces from Greece and surrounding areas, but the actions of Spartan General Pausanias at the siege of Byzantium alienated many of the Greek states from the Spartans, causing the anti-Persian alliance to be reconstituted around Athenian leadership in what became known as the Delian League. The Delian League continued the campaign against the Persians for the next three decades. Some historical sources suggest the end of hostilities between the Greeks and the Persians was marked by a peace treaty between Athens and Persia, called the Peace of Callias.

Athenian Democracy

Athenian democracy developed around the 5th century BCE, in the Greek city-state of

Athens. It is the first known democracy in the world. Other Greek cities set up democracies, most following the Athenian model, but none are as well documented as Athens. Athenian democracy was a system of direct democracy, in which participating citizens voted directly on legislation and executive bills. Participation was open to adult, land-owning men, which historians estimate numbered between 30,000 and 50,000 individuals, out of a total population of approximately 250,000 to 300,000.

Before the first attempt at democratic government, Athens was ruled by a series of *archons*, or chief magistrates, and the Areopagus, which was made up of ex-archons. Archons were typically aristocrats who ruled to their own advantage. Additionally, a series of laws codified by Draco in 621 BCE reinforced the power of the aristocracy over all other citizens. A mediator called Solon reshaped the city-state by restructuring the way citizenship was defined in order to absorb the traditional aristocracy within it, and established the right of every Athenian to participate in meetings of governing assemblies. The Areopagus, however, retained ultimate lawmaking authorities.

Cleisthenes

In 510 BCE, Spartan troops helped the Athenians overthrow their king, the tyrant Hippias, son of Peisistratos. Cleomenes I, king of Sparta, put in place a pro-Spartan oligarchy headed by Isagoras. But his rival, Cleisthenes, with the support of the middle class and aided by democrats, managed to take over. Cleomenes intervened in 508 and 506 BCE, but could not stop Cleisthenes, who was then supported by the Athenians. Through his reforms, the people endowed their city with institutions furnished with equal rights (i.e., isonomic institutions), and established ostracism, a procedure by which any citizen could be expelled from the city-state of Athens for

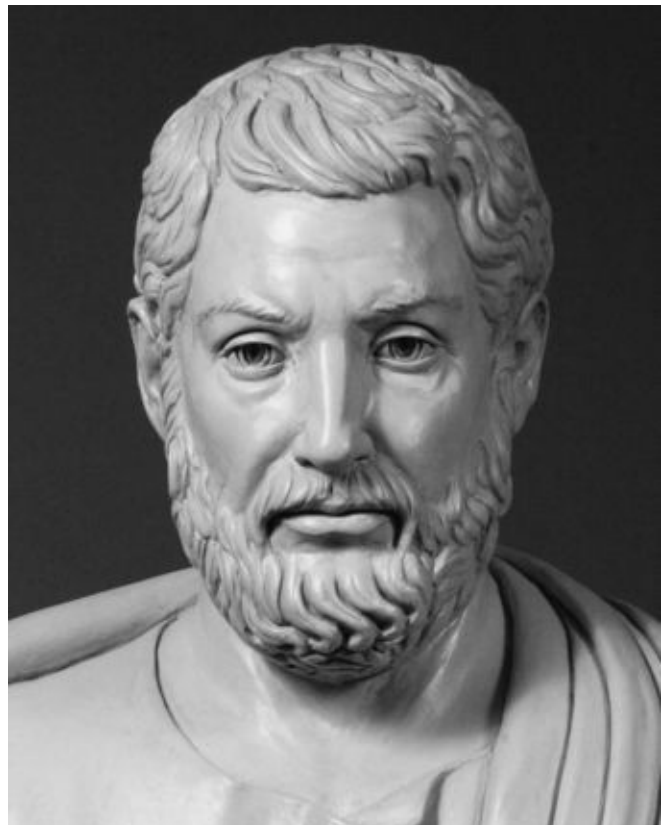


Figure 76 Modern bust of Cleisthenes, known as "the father of Athenian democracy," on view at the Ohio Statehouse, Columbus, Ohio.

ten years.

Cleisthenes, the father of Greek democracy, reformed traditional Athenian government controlled by ruling tribes into the first government "of the people" (a *demos*, or democracy).

The isonomic and isegoric democracy was first organized into about 130 demes— political subdivisions created throughout Attica. Ten thousand citizens exercised their power via an assembly (the *ekklesia*, in Greek), of which they all were a part, which was headed by a council of 500 citizens chosen at random. The city's administrative geography was reworked, the goal being to have mixed political groups—not federated by local interests linked to the sea, the city, or farming—whose decisions (declaration of war, etc.) would depend on their geographical situations. The territory of the city was subsequently divided into 30 *trittyes*. It was this corpus of reforms that would allow the emergence of a wider democracy in the 460s and 450s BCE.

Attributions

- Greek Dark Ages
 - "Palace economy." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palace_economy. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Late Bronze Age collapse." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Late_Bronze_Age_collapse. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Greek Dark Ages." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_Dark_Ages. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- Archaic Greece
 - "Archaic Greece." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archaic_Greece. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Polis." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polis>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Attica_06-13_Athens_50_View_from_Philopappos_-_Acropolis_Hill.jpg." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Attica_06-13_Athens_50_View_from_Philopappos_-_Acropolis_Hill.jpg. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- The Rise of Classical Greece
 - "Greco-Persian Wars." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greco-Persian_Wars.
Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Isonomic." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isonomic>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Classical Greece." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classical_Greece. Wikipedia
CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Athenian democracy." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athenian_democracy.
Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Trittys." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trittys>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "The Delian League." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delian_League. Wikipedia
CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Ostracism." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ostracism>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Polis." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polis>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Cleisthenes."
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cleisthenes%23mediaviewer/File:Cleisthenes.jpg>.
Wikipedia License: Other.

5.2: Sparta

5.2.1: Sparta

Sparta, known for its militaristic culture and unequalled women's rights, was a dominant military power in classical Greece.

Learning Objective

- Distinguish key differences between Athens and Sparta

Key Points

- Sparta was a prominent city-state in ancient Greece, situated on the banks of the Eurotas River in Laconia in southeastern Peloponnese.
- Given its military preeminence, Sparta was recognized as the overall leader of the combined Greek forces during the Greco-Persian Wars, and defeated Athens during the Peloponnesian War.
- Sparta's defeat by Thebes in the Battle of Leuctra in 371 BCE ended Sparta's prominent role in Greece, but it maintained its political independence until the Roman conquest of Greece in 146 BCE.
- Sparta functioned under an oligarchy of two hereditary kings.
- Unique in ancient Greece for its social system and constitution, Spartan society focused heavily on military training and excellence.
- Spartan women enjoyed status, power, and respect that was unequalled in the rest of the classical world.

Key Terms

- **Sparta** – A prominent city-state in ancient Greece situated on the banks of the Eurotas River in Laconia. The dominant military power in ancient Greece.
- **Agoge** – The rigorous education and training regimen mandated for all male Spartan citizens, except for the firstborn sons of the ruling houses Eurypontid and Agiad.

Sparta was a prominent city-state in ancient Greece situated on the banks of the Eurotas River in Laconia in southeastern Peloponnese. It emerged as a political entity around the

10th century BCE, when the invading Dorians subjugated the local, non-Dorian population. Around 650 BCE, it rose to become the dominant military power in ancient Greece. Given



Figure 77 Political geography of ancient Greece.

its military preeminence, Sparta was recognized as the overall leader of the combined Greek forces during the Greco-Persian Wars. Between 431 and 404 BCE, Sparta was the principal enemy of Athens during the Peloponnesian War, from which it emerged victorious, though at great cost. Sparta's defeat by Thebes in the Battle of Leuctra in 371 BCE ended Sparta's prominent role in Greece.

However, it maintained its political independence until the Roman conquest of Greece in 146 BCE.

The Rise of Classical Sparta

The Spartans were already considered a land-fighting force to be reckoned with when, in 480 BCE, a small force of Spartans, Thespians, and Thebans made a legendary final stand at the Battle of Thermopylae against the massive Persian army during the Greco-Persian Wars. The Greek forces suffered very high casualties before finally being encircled and defeated. One year later, Sparta led a Greek alliance against the Persians at the Battle of Plataea where their superior weaponry, strategy, and bronze armor proved a huge asset in achieving a resounding victory. This decisive victory put an end to the Greco-Persian War, as well as Persian ambitions of spreading into Europe. Despite being fought as part of an alliance, the victory was credited to Sparta, which had been the de facto leader of the entire Greek expedition.

In the later classical period, Sparta fought amongst Athens, Thebes, and Persia for supremacy within the region. As a result of the Peloponnesian War, Sparta developed formidable naval power, enabling it to subdue many key Greek states and even overpower the elite Athenian navy. A period of Spartan Hegemony was inaugurated at the end of the 5th century BCE, when Sparta defeated the Athenian Empire and invaded Persian provinces in Anatolia.

Spartan Culture and Government

Sparta functioned under an oligarchy. The state was ruled by two hereditary kings of the Agiad and Eurypontid families, both supposedly descendants of Heracles, and equal in authority so that one could not act against the power and political enactments of his colleague. Unique in ancient Greece for its social system and constitution, Spartan society was completely focused on military training and excellence. Its inhabitants were classified as Spartiates (Spartan citizens who enjoyed full rights), Mothakes (non-Spartan, free men raised as Spartans), Perioikoi (freed men), and Helots (state-owned serfs, part of the enslaved, non-Spartan, local population).

Male Spartans began military training at age seven. The training was designed to encourage discipline and physical toughness, as well as emphasize the importance of the Spartan state. Boys lived in communal messes and, according to Xenophon, whose sons attended the *agoge*, the boys were fed "just the right amount for them never to become sluggish through being too full, while also giving them a taste of what it is not to have enough." Besides physical and weapons training, boys studied reading, writing, music, and dancing. Special punishments were imposed if boys failed to answer questions sufficiently laconically (i.e., briefly and wittily).



Figure 78 Marble statue of a helmed hoplite (5th century BCE), Archaeological Museum of Sparta, Greece.

At age 20, the Spartan citizen began his membership in one of the *syssitia* (dining messes or clubs), which were composed of about 15 members each, and were compulsory. Here each group learned how to bond and rely on one another. The Spartans were not eligible for election to public office until the age of 30. Only native Spartans were considered full

citizens, and were obliged to undergo military training as prescribed by law, as well as participate in, and contribute financially to, one of the *syssitia*.

Spartan Women

Female Spartan citizens enjoyed status, power, and respect that was unequalled in the rest of the classical world. The higher status of females in Spartan society started at birth. Unlike in Athens, Spartan girls were fed the same food as their brothers. Nor were they confined to their father's house or prevented from exercising or getting fresh air. Spartan women even competed in sports. Most important, rather than being married at the age of 12 or 13, Spartan law forbade the marriage of a girl until she was in her late teens or early 20s. The reasons for delaying marriage were to ensure the birth of healthy children, but the effect was to spare Spartan women the hazards and lasting health damage associated with pregnancy among adolescents.

Spartan women, better fed from childhood and fit from exercise, stood a far better chance of reaching old age than their sisters in other Greek cities, where the median life expectancy was 34.6 years, or roughly ten years below that of men. Unlike Athenian women, who wore heavy, concealing clothes and were rarely seen outside the house, Spartan women wore dresses (*peplos*) slit up the side to allow freer movement, and moved freely about the city, either walking or driving chariots.

5.2.2: Culture in Classical Sparta

Although Spartan society was highly regimented, militarily and socially, enslaved classes and women were afforded greater privileges relative to the populations of other Greek city-states.

Learning Objective

- Understand the key characteristics of Sparta's society

Key Points

- Sparta was an oligarchic city-state, ruled by two hereditary kings equal in authority.
- Spartan society was largely structured around the military, and around military training.
- Inhabitants were classified as Spartiates (Spartan citizens, who enjoyed full rights),

Mothakes (non-Spartan, free men raised as Spartans), Perioikoi (free, but non-citizen inhabitants), and Helots (state- owned serfs, part of the enslaved non-Spartan, local population).

- Spartiates began military training at the age of seven.
- At the age of 20, Spartiates were initiated into full citizenship and joined a syssitia.
- Helots were granted many privileges, in comparison to enslaved populations in other Greek city- states.
- The Helot population outnumbered the Spartiate population, and grew over time, causing societal tensions.
- Female Spartans enjoyed status, power, and respect that was unequaled in the rest of the classical world.

Key Terms

- **Ephors** – *Ephors* were ancient Spartan officials who shared power with the hereditary kings. Five individuals were elected annually to swear on behalf of the city, whereas kings served for a lifetime and swore only on their own behalf.
- **Gerousia** – The *gerousia* were a council of Spartan elders comprised of men over the age of 60, who were elected for life, and usually were members of one of the two kings' households.
- **Delphi** – A famous ancient sanctuary that served as the seat of an oracle, who consulted on important decisions throughout the ancient classical world.

The Spartan Political System

Sparta functioned under an oligarchy. The state was ruled by two hereditary kings of the Agiad and Eurypontid families, both supposedly descendants of Heracles, and equal in authority so that one could not act against the power and political enactments of his colleague. The duties of the kings were religious, judicial, and military in nature. They were the chief priests of the state, and maintained contact with Delphi, the sanctuary that exercised great authority in Spartan politics.

By 450 BCE, the kings' judicial authority was restricted to cases dealing with heiresses, adoptions, and public roads. Over time, royal prerogatives were curtailed further until, aside from their service as military generals, the kings became mere figureheads. For

Spartan Citizenship

Sparta had a pyramidal social structure with Spartiates, or full citizens of the polis, at the top; the Perioikoi, or Lacedaemonians of surrounding territory who did not possess full citizen rights, in the

The diagram illustrates the Spartan social and political structure. At the top, the 'Kings' (Agamemnon and Menelaos) are connected to the 'Ephors' (3 Ephors, 1 per village). The 'Ephors' are connected to the 'Spartan' (30 Spartans, 25 men + 500 yr + 2 Kings). The 'Spartan' is connected to the 'Spartans' (All Spartans > 18 yr). The 'Spartans' are connected to the 'Perioikoi' (40 Perioikoi, 25 men + 500 yr + 2 Kings). The 'Perioikoi' are connected to the 'Spartans'. The 'Spartans' are connected to the 'Spartan Society' (3 phylai & 1 village). The 'Spartan Society' is connected to the 'Perioikoi'. A legend at the bottom right identifies the colors: Spartan (blue), Perioikoi (grey), Helots (pink), and Spartan Society (green).

Boundless URL: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/catalog/boundlesscourses>

Spartan kings, regardless of their age. Other than the kings, the members of the Gerousia were elected from the Apella, an assembly of All Spartiates over the age of 18, and served for life.

Male Spartans began military training at age seven. The training was designed to encourage discipline and physical toughness, as well as emphasize the importance of the Spartan state. Typically only men who were to become Spartiates underwent military training, although two exceptions existed to this rule. *Trophimoi*, or "foster sons," from other Greek city-states were allowed to attend training as foreign students. For example, the Athenian general Xenophon sent his two sons to Sparta as *trophimoi*. Additionally, sons of a Helot could enroll as a *syntrophos* if a Spartiate formally adopted him and paid his way. If a *syntrophos* did exceptionally well in training, he could be sponsored to become a Spartiate. Likewise, if a Spartan could not afford to pay the expenses associated with military training, they potentially could lose their right to citizenship.

Boys who underwent training lived in communal messes and, according to Xenophon, whose sons attended the *agoge*, the boys were fed "just the right amount for them never to become sluggish through being too full, while also giving them a taste of what it is not to have enough." Besides physical and weapons training, boys studied reading, writing, music, and dancing. Special punishments were imposed if boys failed to answer questions sufficiently laconically (i.e., briefly and wittily).

At age 20, the Spartan citizen began his membership in one of the *syssitia* (dining messes or clubs), which were composed of about 15 members each, and were compulsory. Here each group learned how to bond and rely on one another. The Spartans were not eligible for election to public office until the age of 30. Only native Spartans were considered full citizens, and were obliged to undergo military training as prescribed by law, as well as participate in, and contribute financially to, one of the *syssitia*.

Helots

Spartiates were actually a minority within Sparta, and Helots made up the largest class of inhabitants of the city-state. Helots were originally free Greeks that the Spartans had defeated in battle, and subsequently enslaved. In contrast to populations conquered by other Greek cities, the male Helot population was not exterminated, and women and

children were not treated as chattel. Instead, Helots were given a subordinate position within Spartan society more comparable to the serfs of medieval Europe. Although Helots did not have voting rights, they otherwise enjoyed a relatively privileged position, in comparison to slave populations in other Greek city-states.

The Spartan poet, Tyrtaios, gives account that Helots were permitted to marry and retain half the fruits of their labor. They were also allowed religious freedoms and could own a limited amount of personal property. Up to 6,000 Helots even accumulated enough wealth to buy their own freedom in 227 BCE.

Since Spartiates were full-time soldiers, manual labor fell to the Helot population who worked as unskilled serfs, tilling the Spartan land or accompanying the Spartan army as non-combatants. Helot women were often used as wet nurses.

Relations between Helots and their Spartan masters were often strained, and there is evidence that at least one Helot revolt occurred circa 465-460 BCE. Many historians argue that because the Helots were permitted such privileges as the maintenance of family and kinship groups and ownership of property, they were better able to retain their identity as a conquered people and thus were more effective at organizing rebellions. Over time, the Spartan population continued to decline and the Helot population grew, and the imbalance in power exasperated tensions that already existed.

Spartan Women

Female Spartans enjoyed status, power, and respect that was unequaled in the rest of the classical world. The higher status of females in Spartan society started at birth. Unlike in Athens, Spartan girls were fed the same food as their brothers. Nor were they confined to their father's house or prevented from exercising or getting fresh air. Spartan women even competed in sports. Most important, rather than being married at the age of 12 or 13, Spartan law forbade the marriage of a girl until she was in her late teens or early 20s. The reasons for delaying marriage were to ensure the birth of healthy children, but the effect was to spare Spartan women the hazards and lasting health damage associated with pregnancy among adolescents.

Spartan women, better fed from childhood and fit from exercise, stood a far better chance

of reaching old age than their sisters in other Greek cities where the median life expectancy was 34.6 years, or roughly ten years below that of men. Unlike Athenian women who wore heavy, concealing clothes and were rarely seen outside the house, Spartan women wore dresses (*peplos*) slit up the side to allow freer movement, and moved freely about the city, either walking or driving chariots.

Attributions

- Sparta
 - "Sparta." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sparta>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Archaic Greece."
<http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/87/ArchaicGr.jpg/603px-ArchaicGr.jpg>. Wikipedia Public domain.
 - "Sparta."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sparta%23mediaviewer/File:Helmed_Hoplite_Sparta.JPG. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- Culture in Classical Sparta
 - "Apella." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apella>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Spartan army." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spartan_army. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Ephor." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ephor>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Gerousia." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerousia>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Delphi." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delphi>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Sparta." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sparta>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "SpartaGreatRhetra.png."
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:SpartaGreatRhetra.png>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

5.3: The Persian Wars

5.3.1: The Persian Wars

The Persian Wars led to the rise of Athens as the head of the Delian League.

Learning Objective

- Explain the consequences of the Persian Wars.

Key Points

- The Persian Wars began in 499 BCE, when Greeks in the Persian-controlled territory rose in the Ionian Revolt.
- Athens, and other Greek cities, sent aid, but were quickly forced to back down after defeat in 494 BCE.
- Subsequently, the Persians suffered many defeats at the hands of the Greeks, led by the Athenians.
- Silver mining contributed to the funding of a massive Greek army that was able to rebuke Persian assaults and eventually defeat the Persians entirely.
- The end of the Persian Wars led to the rise of Athens as the leader of the Delian League.

Key Terms

- **Persian Wars** – A series of conflicts, from 499-449 BCE, between the Achaemenid Empire of Persia and city-states of the Hellenic world.
- **Hoplites** – A citizen-soldier of one of the ancient Greek city-states, armed primarily with spears and a shield.

The Persian Wars (499-449 BCE) were fought between the Achaemenid Empire and the Hellenic world during the Greek classical period. The conflict saw the rise of Athens, and led to its Golden Age.

Origins of the Conflict

Greeks of the classical period believed, and historians generally agree, that in the aftermath of the fall of Mycenaean civilization, many Greek tribes emigrated and settled in Asia Minor. These settlers were from three tribal groups: the Aeolians, Dorians, and

Boundless URL: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/catalog/boundlesscourses>



Edited 2018: Tillamook Bay Community College

Ionians. The Ionians settled along the coasts of Lydia and Caria, and founded 12 towns that remained politically separate from one another, although they did recognize a shared cultural heritage. This formed the basis for an exclusive Ionian "cultural league." The Lydians of western Asia Minor conquered the cities of Ionia, which put the region at conflict with the Median Empire, the precursor to the Achaemenid Empire of the Persian Wars, and a power that the Lydians opposed.

In 553 through 550 BCE, the Persian prince Cyrus led a successful revolt against the last Median king Astyages, and founded the Achaemenid Empire. Seeing an opportunity in the upheaval, the famous Lydian king Croesus asked the oracle at Delphi whether he should attack the Persians in order to extend his realm. According to Herodotus, he received the ambiguous answer that "if Croesus was to cross the Halys [River] he would destroy a great empire." Croesus chose to attack, and in the process he destroyed his own empire, with Lydia falling to Prince Cyrus. The Ionians sought to maintain autonomy under the Persians as they had under the Lydians, and resisted the Persians militarily for some time. However, due to their unwillingness to rise against the Lydians during previous conflicts, they were not granted special terms. Finding the Ionians difficult to rule, the Persians installed tyrants in every city, as a means of control.



Figure 80 The Achaemenid Empire at its greatest extent.

At its greatest extent, the Achaemenid Empire included all of the territory of modern-day Iran, Turkey, Iraq, Kuwait, Syria, Jordan, Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Afghanistan, all significant population centers of Ancient Egypt as far west as eastern Libya, Thrace-Macedonia and Paeonia, the Black Sea coastal regions of Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, and Russia,

all of Armenia, Georgia (incl. Abkhazia), Azerbaijan, parts of the North Caucasus, and much of Central Asia; encompassing around 5.5 million square kilometers, making it one of the largest empires in history. With some population estimates of 50 million in 480 BCE, the Achaemenid Empire at its peak was one of the empires with the highest share of the global population.

The Ionian Revolt

In 499 BCE, Greeks in the region rose up against Persian rule in the Ionian Revolt. At the heart of the rebellion lay a deep dissatisfaction with the tyrants who were appointed by the Persians to rule the local Greek communities. Specifically, the riot was incited by the Milesian tyrant Aristagoras, who in the wake of a failed expedition to conquer Naxos, utilized Greek unrest against Persian king Darius the Great to his own political purposes.

Athens and other Greek cities sent aid, but were quickly forced to back down after defeat in 494 BCE, at the Battle of Lade. As a result, Asia Minor returned to Persian control. Nonetheless, the Ionian Revolt remains significant as the first major conflict between Greece and the Persian Empire, as well as the first phase of the Persian Wars. Darius vowed to exact revenge against Athens, and developed a plan to conquer all Greeks in an attempt to secure the stability of his empire.

First Persian Invasion of Greece

In 492 BCE, the Persian general, Mardonius, led a campaign through Thrace and Macedonia. During this campaign, Mardonius re-subjugated Thrace and forced Macedonia to become a fully submissive client of the Persian Empire, whereas before they had maintained a broad degree of autonomy. While victorious, he was wounded and forced to retreat back into Asia Minor. Additionally, he lost his 1200-ship naval fleet to a storm off the coast of Mount Athos. Darius sent ambassadors to all Greek cities to demand full submission in light of the recent Persian victory, and all cities submitted, with the exceptions of Athens and Sparta, both of which executed their respective ambassadors. These actions signaled Athens' continued defiance and brought Sparta into the conflict.



Figure 81 Depiction of a Greek hoplite and a Persian warrior fighting each other on an ancient kylix.

In 490 BCE, approximately 100,000 Persians landed in Attica intending to conquer Athens, but were defeated at the Battle of Marathon by a Greek army of 9,000 Athenian hoplites and 1,000 Plateans, led by the Athenian general, Miltiades. The Persian fleet continued to sail to Athens but, seeing it garrisoned, decided not to attempt an assault. The Battle of Marathon was a watershed moment in the Persian Wars, in that it demonstrated to the Greeks that the Persians could be defeated. It also demonstrated the superiority of the more heavily armed Greek hoplites.

Interbellum (490-480 BCE)

After the failure of the first Persian invasion, Darius raised a large army with the intent of invading Greece again. However, in 486 BCE, Darius's Egyptian subjects revolted, postponing any advancement against Greece. During preparations to march on Egypt, Darius died and his son, Xerxes I, inherited the throne. Xerxes quickly crushed the Egyptians and resumed preparations to invade Greece.

Second Invasion of Greece

In 480 BCE, Xerxes sent a much more powerful force of 300,000 soldiers by land, with 1,207 ships in support, across a double pontoon bridge over the Hellespont. This army took Thrace before descending on Thessaly and Boetia, whilst the Persian navy skirted the coast and resupplied the ground troops. The Greek fleet, meanwhile, dashed to block Cape Artemision. After being delayed by Leonidas I, the Spartan king of the Agiad Dynasty, at the Battle of Thermopylae (a battle made famous due to the sheer imbalance of forces, with 300 Spartans facing the entire Persian Army), Xerxes advanced into Attica, where he captured and burned Athens. But the Athenians had evacuated the city by sea, and under the command of Themistocles, defeated the Persian fleet at the Battle of Salamis.

In 483 BCE, during the period of peace between the two Persian invasions, a vein of silver ore had been discovered in the Laurion (a small mountain range near Athens), and the ore that was mined there paid for the construction of 200 warships to combat Aeginetan piracy. A year later, the Greeks, under the Spartan Pausanias, defeated the Persian army at Plataea. Meanwhile, the allied Greek navy won a decisive victory at the Battle of Mycale, destroying the Persian fleet, crippling Xerxes's sea power, and marking

the ascendancy of the Greek fleet. Following the Battle of Plataea and the Battle of Mycale, the Persians began withdrawing from Greece and never attempted an invasion again.

Greek Counterattack

The Battle of Mycale was in many ways a turning point, after which the Greeks went on the offensive against the Persian fleet. The Athenian fleet turned to chasing the Persians from the Aegean Sea, and in 478 BCE, the fleet then proceeded to capture Byzantium. In the course of doing so, Athens enrolled all the island states, and some mainland states, into an alliance called the Delian League—so named because its treasury was kept on the sacred island of Delos, whose purpose was to continue fighting the Persian Empire, prepare for future invasions, and organize a means of dividing the spoils of war. The Spartans, although they had taken part in the war, withdrew into isolation afterwards. The Spartans believed that the war's purpose had already been reached through the liberation of mainland Greece and the Greek cities of Asia Minor. Historians also speculate that Sparta was unconvinced of the ability of the Delian League to secure long-term security for Asian Greeks. The Spartan withdrawal from the League allowed Athens to establish unchallenged naval and commercial power within the Hellenic world.

5.3.2: Effects of the Persian Wars

Despite their victories in the Persian Wars, the Greek city-states emerged from the conflict more divided than united.

Learning Objective

- Understand the effect the Persian Wars had on the balance of power throughout the classical world

Key Points

- After the second Persian invasion of Greece was halted, Sparta withdrew from the Delian League and reformed the Peloponnesian League with its original allies.
- Many Greek city-states had been alienated from Sparta following the violent actions of Spartan leader Pausanias during the siege of Byzantium.
- Following Sparta's departure from the Delian League, Athens was able to use the

resources of the League to its own ends, which led it into conflict with less powerful members of the League.

- The Persian Empire adopted a divide-and-rule strategy in relation to the Greek city-states in the wake of the Persian Wars, stoking already simmering conflicts, including the rivalry between Athens and Sparta, to protect the Persian Empire against further Greek attacks.

Key Terms

- **Peloponnesian League** – An alliance formed around Sparta in the Peloponnese, from the 6th to 4th centuries BCE.
- **Delian League** – An association of Greek city-states under the leadership of Athens, the purpose of which was to continue fighting the Persian Empire after the Greek victories at the end of the Second Persian invasion of Greece.
- **Hegemony** – The political, economic, or military predominance or control of one state over others.

Aftermath of the Persian Wars

As a result of the allied Greek success, a large contingent of the Persian fleet was destroyed and all Persian garrisons were expelled from Europe, marking an end of Persia's advance westward into the continent. The cities of Ionia were also liberated from Persian control. Despite their successes, however, the spoils of war caused greater inner conflict within the Hellenic world. The violent actions of Spartan leader Pausanias at the siege of Byzantium, for instance, alienated many of the Greek states from Sparta, and led to a shift in the military command of the Delian League from Sparta to Athens. This set the stage for Sparta's eventual withdrawal from the Delian League.

Two Leagues

Following the two Persian invasions of Greece, and during the Greek counterattacks that commenced after the Battles of Plataea and Mycale, Athens enrolled all island and some mainland city-states into an alliance, called the Delian League, the purpose of which was to pursue conflict with the Persian Empire, prepare for future invasions, and organize a means of dividing the spoils of war. The Spartans, although they had taken part in the war, withdrew from the Delian League early on, believing that the war's initial purpose had been

met with the liberation of mainland Greece and the Greek cities of Asia Minor. Historians also speculate that Sparta decided to leave the League for pragmatic reasons, remaining unconvinced that it was possible to secure long-term security for Greeks residing in Asia Minor, and as a result of their unease with Athenian efforts to increase their power. Once Sparta withdrew from the Delian League after the Persian Wars, it reformed the Peloponnesian League, which had originally been formed in the 6th century and provided the blueprint for what was now the Delian League. The Spartan withdrawal from the League had the effect, however, of allowing Athens to establish unchallenged naval and commercial power, unrivaled throughout the Hellenic world. In fact, shortly after the League's inception, Athens began to use the League's navy for its own purposes, which frequently led it into conflict with other, less powerful League members.



Figure 82 The Delian League was the basis for the Athenian Empire, shown here on the brink of the Peloponnesian War (c. 431 BCE).

Delian League Rebellions

A series of rebellions occurred between Athens and the smaller city-states that were members of the League. For example, Naxos was the first member of the League to attempt to secede, in approximately 471 BCE. It was later defeated and forced to tear down its defensive city walls, surrender its fleet, and lost voting privileges in the League. Thasos, another League member, also defected when, in 465 BCE, Athens

founded the colony of Amphipolis on the Strymon River, which threatened Thasos' interests in the mines of Mt Pangaion. Thasos allied with Persia and petitioned Sparta for assistance, but Sparta was unable to help because it was facing the largest helot revolution in its history. Nonetheless, relations between Athens and Sparta were soured by the situation. After a three-year long siege, Thasos was recaptured and forced back into the Delian League, though it also lost its defensive walls and fleet, its mines were turned over to Athens, and the city-state was forced to pay yearly tribute and fines. According to Thucydides, the siege of Thasos marked the transformation of the League from an alliance into a hegemony.

Persia

Following their defeats at the hands of the Greeks, and plagued by internal rebellions that hindered their ability to fight foreign enemies, the Persians adopted a policy of divide-and-rule. Beginning in 449 BCE, the Persians attempted to aggravate the growing tensions between Athens and Sparta, and would even bribe politicians to achieve these aims. Their strategy was to keep the Greeks distracted with in-fighting, so as to stop the tide of counterattacks reaching the Persian Empire. Their strategy was largely successful, and there was no open conflict between the Greeks and Persia until 396 BCE, when the Spartan king Agesilaus briefly invaded Asia Minor.

Attributions

- The Persian Wars
 - "Achaemenid Empire." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Achaemenid_Empire. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Classical Greece." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classical_Greece%23The_Persian_Wars. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Hoplite." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hoplite>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Delian League." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delian_League. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Greco-Persian Wars." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greco-Persian_Wars. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "AchaemenidMapBehistunInscription.png." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:AchaemenidMapBehistunInscription.png>. Wikipedia CC BY 1.0 Generic.
 - "Greek-Persian_duel.jpg." https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Greek-Persian_duel.jpg. Wikimedia Public domain.
- Effects of the Persian Wars
 - "Greco-Persian Wars." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greco-Persian_Wars. Wikipedia CC BY- SA 3.0.
 - "Delian League." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delian_League. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Peloponnesian League."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peloponnesian_League. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- "Hegemony." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hegemony>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Map_athenian_empire_431_BC-en.svg."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Map_athenian_empire_431_BC-en.svg.
Wikimedia CC BY-SA 2.5.

5.4: Athens

5.4.1: Athens

Athens attained its Golden Age under Pericles in the 5th century BCE, and flourished culturally as the hegemonic power of the Hellenic world.

Learning Objective

- Understand the factors contributing to the rise and fall of Athens

Key Points

- Cleisthenes overthrew the dictator Hippias in 511/510 BCE in order to establish democracy at Athens.
- Athens entered its Golden Age in the 5th century BCE, when it abandoned the pretense of parity and relocated the treasury of the Delian League from Delos to Athens. This money funded the building of the Athenian Acropolis, put half the Athenian population on the public payroll, and allowed Athens to build and maintain the dominant naval power in the Greek world.
- With the empire's funds, military dominance, and its political fortunes as guided by statesman and orator Pericles, Athens produced some of the most influential and enduring cultural artifacts of the Western tradition.
- Tensions within the Delian League brought about the Peloponnesian War (431-404 BCE), during which Athens was defeated by its rival, Sparta. Athens lost further power when the armies of Philip II defeated an alliance of Greek city-states.

Key Terms

- **Acropolis** – A settlement, especially a citadel, built upon an area of elevated ground, frequently a hill with precipitous sides, chosen for purposes of defense. Often the nuclei of large cities of classical antiquity.
- **Pericles** – A prominent and influential Greek statesman, orator, and general of Athens during its Golden Age, in the time between the Persian and Peloponnesian wars.
- **Delian League** – Founded in 478 BCE, an association of Greek city-states under the leadership of Athens, whose purpose was to fight the Persian Empire during the

The Rise of Athens (508-448 BCE)

In 514 BCE, the dictator Hippias established stability and prosperity with his rule of Athens, but remained very unpopular as a ruler. With the help of an army from Sparta in 511/510 BCE, he was overthrown by Cleisthenes, a radical politician of aristocratic background who established democracy in Athens.

Prior to the rise of Athens, Sparta, a city-state with a militaristic culture, considered itself



Figure 83 Greek-Persian Duel.

the leader of the Greeks, and enforced an hegemony. In 499 BCE, Athens sent troops to aid the Ionian Greeks of Asia Minor, who were rebelling against the Persian Empire during the Ionian Revolt. This provoked two Persian invasions of Greece, both of which were repelled under the leadership of the soldier-statesmen Miltiades and Themistocles, during the Persian Wars. In the decades that followed, the Athenians, with the help of the Spartans and other allied Greek city-states, managed to rout the Persians.

These victories enabled Athens to bring most of the Aegean, and many other parts of Greece, together in the Delian League, creating an Athenian-dominated alliance from which Sparta and its allies withdrew.

Athenian Hegemony and the Age of Pericles

The 5th century BCE was a period of Athenian political hegemony, economic growth, and cultural flourishing that is sometimes referred to as the Golden Age of Athens. The latter part of this time period is often called The Age of Pericles. After peace was made with Persia in the 5th century BCE, what started as an alliance of independent city-states became an Athenian empire. Athens moved to abandon the pretense of parity among its allies, and relocated the Delian League treasury from Delos to Athens, where it funded the

building of the Athenian Acropolis, put half its population on the public payroll, and maintained the dominant naval power in the Greek world. With the empire's funds, military dominance, and its political fortunes as guided by statesman and orator Pericles, Athens produced some of the most influential and enduring cultural artifacts of Western tradition, during what became known as the Golden Age of Athenian democracy, or the Age of Pericles. The playwrights Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides all lived and worked in Athens during this time, as did historians Herodotus and Thucydides, the physician Hippocrates, and the philosopher Socrates.



Figure 84 The caryatid statues of the Erechtheion on the Acropolis.

Pericles was arguably the most prominent and influential Greek statesman, orator, and general of Athens during its Golden Age. One of his most popular reforms while in power was to allow *thetes* (Athenians without wealth) to occupy public office. Another success of his administration was the creation of the *misthophoria*, a special salary for the citizens that attended the courts as jurors. As Athens' ruler, he helped the city to prosper with a resplendent culture and democratic institutions.

5th century Athenian Political Institutions

The administration of the Athenian state was managed by a group of people referred to as magistrates, who were submitted to rigorous public control and chosen by lot. Only two magistrates were directly elected by the Popular Assembly: *strategos* (or generals), and magistrates of finance. All magistrates served for a year or less, with the exception of Pericles, who was elected year after year to public office. At the end of their service, magistrates were required to give an account of their administration and use of public finances.

The most elite posts in the Athenian political system belonged to archons. In ages past, they served as heads of the Athenian state, but in the Age of Pericles they lost much of their influence and power, though they still presided over tribunals. The Assembly of the

People was the first organ of democracy in Athens. In theory, it was composed of all the citizens of Athens. However, it is estimated that the maximum number of participants it witnessed was 6,000. The Assembly met in front of the Acropolis and decided on laws and decrees. Once the Assembly gave its decision in a certain matter, the issue was raised to the Council, or Boule, to provide definitive approval.

The Council consisted of 500 members, 50 from each tribe, and functioned as an extension of the Assembly. Council members were chosen by lot in a similar manner to magistrates and supervised the work of the magistrates in addition to other legal projects and administrative details. They also oversaw the city-state's external affairs.

Athenian Defeat and Conquest By Macedon

Originally intended as an association of Greek city-states to continue the fight against the Persians, the Delian League soon turned into a vehicle for Athens's own imperial ambitions and empire-building. The resulting tensions brought about the Peloponnesian War (431-404 BCE), in which Athens was defeated by its rival, Sparta. By the mid-4th century BCE, the northern Greek kingdom of Macedon was becoming dominant in Athenian affairs. In 338 BCE, the armies of Philip II of Macedon defeated an alliance of some of the Greek city-states, including Athens and Thebes, at the Battle of Chaeronea, effectively ending Athenian independence.

7.4.2: Athenian Society

Classical Athenian society was structured as a democratic patriarchy that strived towards egalitarian ideals.

Learning Objective

- Understand the structures of Athenian society in the classical period

Key Points

- The citizens of Athens decided matters of state in the Assembly of the People, the principle organ of Athens's democracy.
- The Athenian democracy provided a number of governmental resources to its population in order to encourage participation in the democratic process.
- Many governmental posts in classical Athens were chosen by lot, in an attempt to

discourage corruption and patronage.

- The Athenian elite lived relatively modestly, and wealth and land were not concentrated in the hands of the few, but rather distributed fairly evenly across the upper classes.
- Thetes occupied the lowest rung of Athenian society, but were granted the right to hold public office during the reforms of Ephialtes and Pericles.
- Athenian society was a patriarchy; men held all rights and advantages, such as access to education and power.
- Athenian women were dedicated to the care and upkeep of the family home.

Key Terms

- **Thetes** – The lowest social class of citizens in ancient Athens.
- **Assembly of the People** – The democratic congregation of classical Athens, which, in theory, brought together all citizens to decide upon proposed laws and decrees.

Structure of the Athenian Government

In the Assembly of the People, Athenian citizens decided matters of state. In theory, it was composed of all the citizens of Athens; however, it is estimated that the maximum number of participants it included was 6,000. Since many citizens were incapable of exercising political rights, due to their poverty or ignorance, a number of governmental resources existed to encourage inclusivity. For example, the Athenian democracy provided the following to its population:

- Concession of salaries to public functionaries
- Help finding work for the poor
- Land grants for dispossessed villagers
- Public assistance for war widows, invalids, orphans, and indigents

In order to discourage corruption and patronage, most public offices that did not require specialized expertise were appointed by lot rather than by election. Offices were also rotated so that members could serve in all capacities in turn, in order to ensure that political functions were instituted as smoothly as possible regardless of each individual

official's capacity.

When the Assembly of the People reached decisions on laws and decrees, the issue was raised to a body called the Council, or *Boule*, to provide definitive approval. The Council consisted of 500 members, 50 from each tribe, and functioned as an extension of the Assembly. Council members, who were chosen by lot, supervised the work of other government officials, legal projects, and other administrative details. They also oversaw the city-state's external affairs.

Athenians in the Age of Pericles

The Athenian elite lived modestly and without great luxuries compared to the elites of other ancient societies. Wealth and land ownership was not typically concentrated in the hands of a few people. In fact, 71-73% of the citizen population owned 60-65% of the land. By contrast, *thetes* occupied the lowest



Figure 85 The Acropolis in Athens, Greece.

social class of citizens in Athens. *Thetes* worked for wages or had less than 200 *medimnoi* as yearly income. Many held crucial roles in the Athenian navy as rowers, due to the preference of many ancient navies to rely on free men to row their galleys. During the reforms of Ephialtes and Pericles around 460- 450 BCE, *thetes* were granted the right to hold public office.

Boys were educated at home until the age of seven, at which time they began formal schooling. Subjects included reading, writing, mathematics, and music, as well as physical education classes that were intended to prepare students for future military service. At the age of 18, service in the army was compulsory.

Athenian women were dedicated to the care and upkeep of the family home. Athenian society was a patriarchy; men held all rights and advantages, such as access to education and power. Nonetheless, some women, known as *hetaeras*, did receive an education with the specific purpose of entertaining men, similar to the Japanese geisha tradition.

Hetaeras were considered higher in status than other women, but lower in status than men. One famous example of a *hetaera* is Pericles' mistress, Aspasia of Miletus, who is said to have debated with prominent writers and thinkers, including Socrates.

Attributions

- Athens
 - "Caryatid." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caryatid>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Athens." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athens>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Classical Athens." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classical_Athens. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Acropolis." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acropolis>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Age of Pericles." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Age_of_Pericles. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Delian League." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delian_League. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Pericles." <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Pericles>. Wiktionary CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Fifth-century Athens." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fifth-century_Athens. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Greek-Persian Duel." https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Greek-Persian_duel.jpg. Wikimedia Public domain.
 - "Classical Athens."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ath%C3%A8nes_Acropole_Caryatides.JPG. Wikimedia GNU FDL 1.2.
- Athenian Society
 - "Thetes." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thetes>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Fifth-century Athens." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fifth-century_Athens. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Lightmatter_acropolis.jpg."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lightmatter_acropolis.jpg.
Wikimedia CC BY 1.0 Generic.

5.5: Culture in Classical Greece

5.5.1: Classical Greek Philosophy

The three most famous Classical Greek philosophers are Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.

Learning Objective

- Understand the main philosophical beliefs of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle

Key Points

- Socrates is best known for having pursued a probing question-and-answer style of examination on a number of topics, usually attempting to arrive at a defensible and attractive definition of a virtue.
- In 399 BCE, Socrates was charged for his philosophical inquiries, convicted, and sentenced to death.
- Plato was a student of Socrates, and is the author of numerous dialogues and letters, as well as one of the primary sources available to modern scholars on Socrates' life.
- In his defining work, *The Republic*, Plato reaches the conclusion that a utopian city is likely impossible because philosophers would refuse to rule and the people would refuse to compel them to do so.
- Aristotle was a student of Plato, the tutor of Alexander the Great, and founder of the Lyceum and Peripatetic School of philosophy in Athens. He wrote on a number of subjects, including logic, physics, metaphysics, ethics, rhetoric, politics, and botany.

Key Terms

- **Allegory of the cave** – A paradoxical analogy wherein Socrates argues that the invisible world is the most intelligible, and the visible world is the least knowable and obscure. Plato has Socrates describe a gathering of people who have lived chained to the wall of a cave all of their lives, facing a blank wall upon which shadows are projected. The shadows are as close as the prisoners get to viewing reality.
- **Aristotle** – The student of Plato, tutor to Alexander the Great, and founder of the Lyceum. A Greek philosopher who wrote on a number of topics, including logic, ethics, and metaphysics.

- **Aporia** – In philosophy, a paradox or state of puzzlement; in rhetoric, a useful expression of doubt.
- **Socrates** – A classical Greek (Athenian) philosopher credited as one of the founders of Western philosophy. Known for a question-answer style of examination.
- **Plato** – The student of Socrates and author of *The Republic*. A philosopher and mathematician in classical Greece.

Classical Greece saw a flourishing of philosophers, especially in Athens during its Golden Age. Of these philosophers, the most famous are Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.

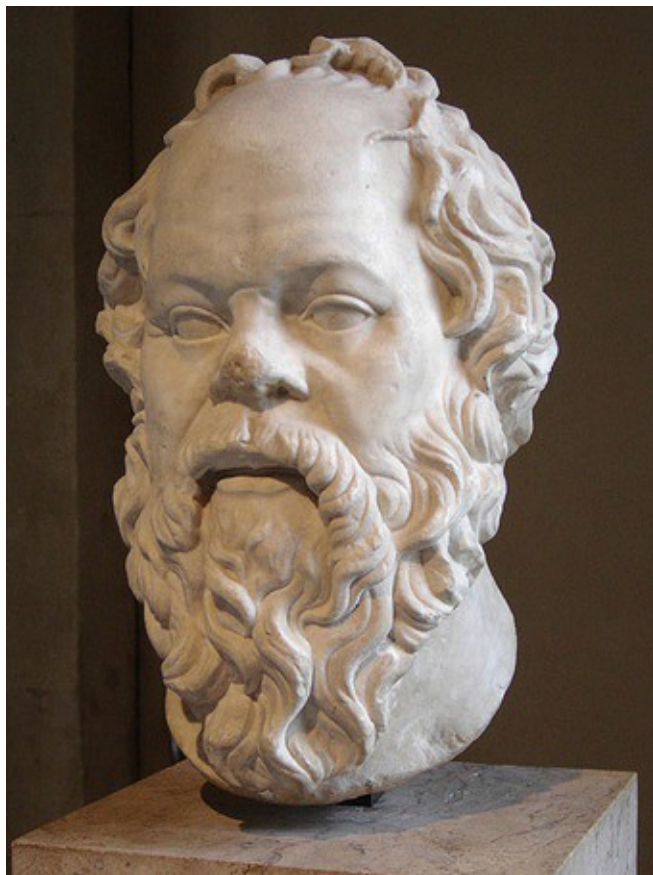


Figure 86 Bust of Socrates, currently in the Louvre.

Socrates

Socrates, born in Athens in the 5th century BCE, marks a watershed in ancient Greek philosophy. Athens was a center of learning, with sophists and philosophers traveling from across Greece to teach rhetoric, astronomy, cosmology, geometry, and the like. The great statesman Pericles was closely associated with these new teachings, however, and his political opponents struck at him by taking advantage of a conservative reaction against the philosophers. It became a crime to investigate issues above the heavens or below the earth because they were considered impious. While other philosophers, such as Anaxagoras, were forced to flee Athens, Socrates was the

only documented individual charged under this law, convicted, and sentenced to death in 399 BCE. In the version of his defense speech presented by Plato, he claims that the envy others experience on account of his being a philosopher is what will lead to his conviction.

Many conversations involving Socrates (as recounted by Plato and Xenophon) end without

having reached a firm conclusion, a style known as *aporia*. Socrates is said to have pursued this probing question-and-answer style of examination on a number of topics, usually attempting to arrive at a defensible and attractive definition of a virtue. While Socrates' recorded conversations rarely provide a definitive answer to the question under examination, several maxims or paradoxes for which he has become known recur. Socrates taught that no one desires what is bad, and so if anyone does something that truly is bad, it must be unwillingly or out of ignorance; consequently, all virtue is knowledge. He frequently remarks on his own ignorance (claiming that he does not know what courage is, for example). Plato presents Socrates as distinguishing himself from the common run of mankind by the fact that, while they know nothing noble and good, they do not know that they do not know, whereas Socrates knows and acknowledges that he knows nothing noble and good.

Socrates was morally, intellectually, and politically at odds with many of his fellow Athenians. When he was on trial, he used his method of *elenchos*, a dialectic method of inquiry that resembles the scientific method, to demonstrate to the jurors that their moral values are wrong-headed. He tells them they are concerned with their families, careers, and political responsibilities when they ought to be worried about the "welfare of their souls." Socrates' assertion that the gods had singled him out as a divine emissary seemed to provoke irritation, if not outright ridicule. Socrates also questioned the Sophistic doctrine that *arete* (virtue) can be taught. He liked to observe that successful fathers (such as the prominent military general Pericles) did not produce sons of their own quality. Socrates argued that moral excellence was more a matter of divine bequest than parental nurture.

Plato

Plato was an Athenian of the generation after Socrates. Ancient tradition ascribes 36 dialogues and 13 letters to him, although of these only 24 of the dialogues are now universally recognized as authentic. Most modern scholars believe that at least 28 dialogues, and two of the letters, were in fact written by Plato, although all of the 36 dialogues have some defenders. Plato's dialogues feature Socrates, although not always as the leader of the conversation. Along with Xenophon, Plato is the primary source of information about Socrates' life and beliefs, and it is not always easy to distinguish between the two.

Much of what is known about Plato's doctrines is derived from what Aristotle reports about them, and many of Plato's political doctrines are derived from Aristotle's works, *The Republic*, *the Laws*, and *the Statesman*.

The Republic contains the suggestion that there will not be justice in cities unless they are ruled by philosopher kings; those responsible for enforcing the laws are compelled to hold their women, children, and property in common; and the individual is taught to pursue the common good through noble lies. *The Republic* determines that such a city is likely impossible, however, and generally assumes that philosophers would refuse to rule if the citizenry asked them to, and moreover, the citizenry would refuse to compel philosophers to rule in the first place.

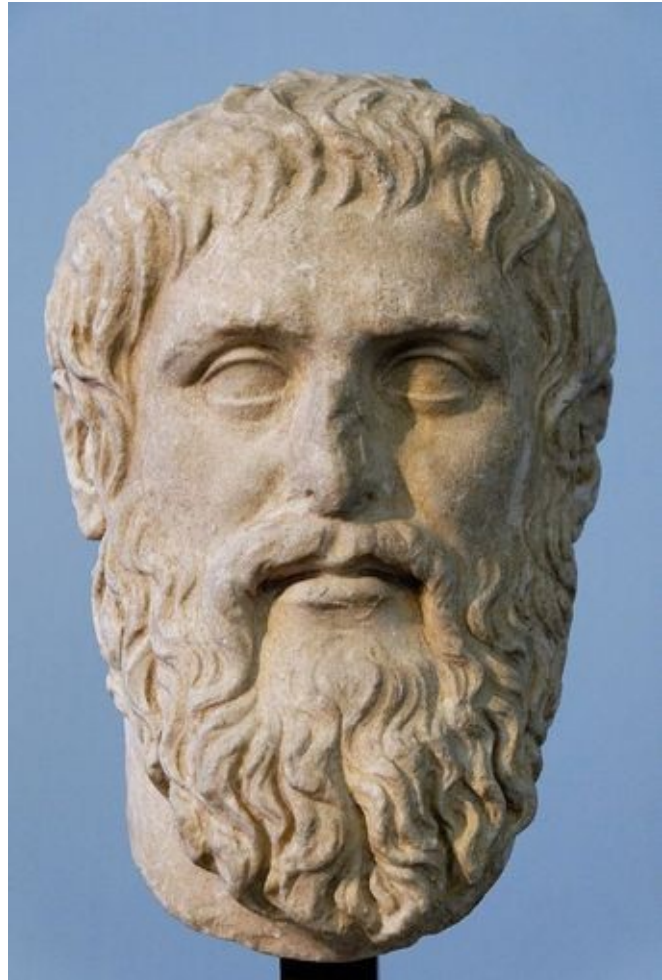


Figure 87 A copy of Plato's portrait bust by Silanion.

"Platonism" is a term coined by scholars to refer to the intellectual consequences of denying, as Plato's Socrates often

does, the reality of the material world. In several dialogues, most notably *The Republic*, Socrates inverts the common man's intuition about what is knowable and what is real.

While most people take the objects of their senses to be real if anything is, Socrates is contemptuous of people who think that something has to be graspable in the hands to be real. Socrates's idea that reality is unavailable to those who use their senses is what puts him at odds with the common man and with common sense. Socrates says that he who sees with his eyes is blind, and this idea is most famously captured in his allegory of the cave, a paradoxical analogy wherein Socrates argues that the invisible world is the most intelligible and that the visible world is the least knowable and most obscure. In the allegory, Socrates describes a gathering of people who have lived chained to the wall of a

cave facing a blank wall. The people watch shadows projected on the wall from the fire burning behind them, and the people begin to name and describe the shadows, which are the closest images they have to reality. Socrates then explains that a philosopher is like a prisoner released from that cave who comes to understand the shadows on the wall are not reality.

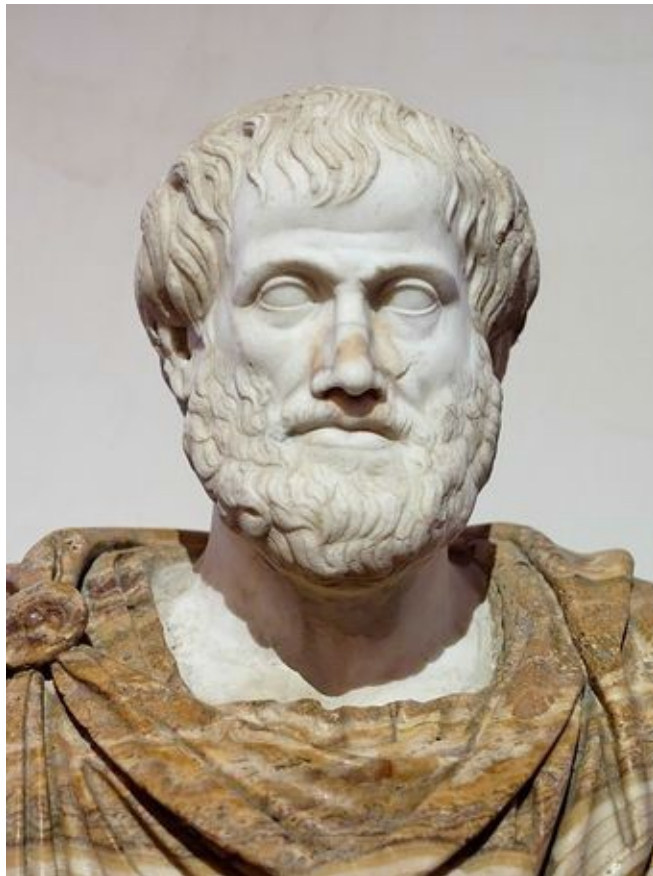


Figure 88 Roman copy in marble of a Greek bronze bust of Aristotle by Lysippus, c. 330 BCE. The alabaster mantle is modern.

Aristotle

Aristotle moved to Athens from his native Stageira in 367 BCE, and began to study philosophy, and perhaps even rhetoric, under Isocrates. He eventually enrolled at Plato's Academy. He left Athens approximately twenty years later to study botany and zoology, became a tutor of Alexander the Great, and ultimately returned to Athens a decade later to establish his own school, the Lyceum. He is the founder of the Peripatetic School of philosophy, which aims to glean facts from experiences and explore the "why" in all things. In other words, he advocates learning by induction.

At least 29 of Aristotle's treatises have survived, known as the *corpus*

Aristotelicum, and address a variety of subjects including logic, physics, optics, metaphysics, ethics, rhetoric, politics, poetry, botany, and zoology. Aristotle is often portrayed as disagreeing with his teacher, Plato. He criticizes the regimes described in Plato's *Republic* and *Laws*, and refers to the theory of forms as "empty words and poetic metaphors." He preferred utilizing empirical observation and practical concerns in his works. Aristotle did not consider virtue to be simple knowledge as Plato did, but founded in one's nature, habit, and reason. Virtue was gained by acting in accordance with nature and moderation.

5.5.2: Classical Greek Poetry and History

Homer, one of the greatest Greek poets, significantly influenced classical Greek historians as their field turned increasingly towards scientific evidence-gathering and analysis of cause and effect.

Learning Objective

- Explain how epic poetry influenced the development of classical Greek historical texts

Key Points

- The formative influence of the Homeric epics in shaping Greek culture was widely recognized, and Homer was described as the teacher of Greece.
- The *Iliad*, sometimes referred to as the *Song of Ilion* or *Song of Ilium*, is set during the Trojan War and recounts the battles and events surrounding a quarrel between King Agamemnon and the warrior Achilles.
- Herodotus is referred to as "The Father of History," and is the first historian known to have broken from Homeric tradition in order to treat historical subjects as a method of investigation arranged into a historiographic narrative.
- Thucydides, who had been trained in rhetoric, provided a model of historical prose-writing based more firmly in factual progression of a narrative, whereas Herodotus, due to frequent digressions and asides, appeared to minimize his authorial control.
- Thucydides is sometimes known as the father of "scientific history," or an early precursor to 20th century scientific positivism, because of his strict adherence to evidence-gathering and analysis of historical cause and effect without reference to divine intervention.
- Despite its heavy political slant, scholars cite strong literary and philosophical influences in Thucydides' work.

Key Terms

- **Homer** – A Greek poet of the 7th or 8th century BCE; author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.
- **Dactylic hexameter** – A form of meter in poetry or a rhythmic scheme. Traditionally associated with the quantitative meter of classical epic poetry in both Greek and

Latin, and consequently considered to be the grand style of classical poetry.

Homer

In the Western classical tradition, Homer is the author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and is revered as the greatest of ancient Greek epic poets. These epics lie at the beginning of the Western canon of literature, and have had an enormous influence on the history of literature. Whether and when Homer lived is unknown. The ancient Greek author Herodotus estimates that Homer lived 400 years before his own time, which would place him at around 850 BCE, while other ancient sources claim that he lived much nearer to the supposed time of the Trojan War, in the early 12th century BCE. Most modern researchers place Homer in the 7th or 8th centuries BCE.

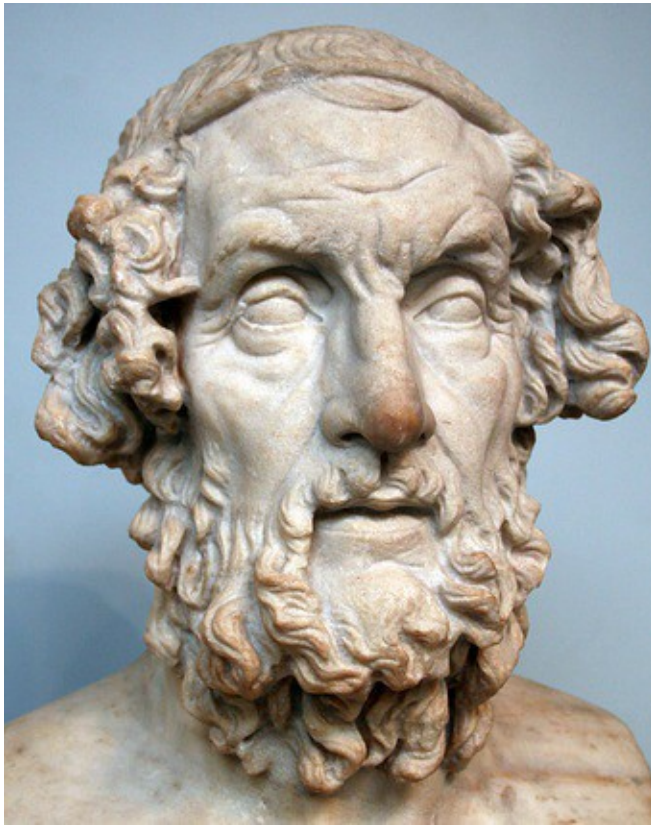


Figure 89 Idealized portrayal of Homer dating to the Hellenistic period; located at the British Museum.

The formative influence of the Homeric epics in shaping Greek culture was widely recognized, and Homer was described as the "Teacher of Greece." Homer's works, some 50% of which are speeches, provided models in persuasive speaking and writing that were emulated throughout the ancient and Medieval Greek worlds. Fragments of Homer account for nearly half of all identifiable Greek literary papyrus finds.

The *Iliad*

The *Iliad* (sometimes referred to as the *Song of Ilion* or *Song of Ilium*) is an ancient Greek epic poem in dactylic hexameter. Set during the Trojan War (the ten-year siege of the city of Troy (Ilium) by

a coalition of Greek states), it tells of the battles and events surrounding a quarrel between King Agamemnon and the warrior Achilles. Although the story covers only a few weeks in the final year of the war, the *Iliad* mentions or alludes to many of the Greek legends about

the siege. The epic narrative describes events prophesied for the future, such as Achilles' looming death and the sack of Troy. The events are prefigured and alluded to more and more vividly, so that when the story reaches an end, the poem has told a more or less complete tale of the Trojan War.

Nineteenth century excavations at Hisarlik provided scholars with historical evidence for the events of the Trojan War, as told by Homer in the *Iliad*. Additionally, linguistic studies into oral epic traditions in nearby civilizations, and the deciphering of Linear B in the 1950s, provided further evidence that the Homeric poems could have been derived from oral transmissions of long-form tales about a war that actually took place. The likely historicity of the *Iliad* as a piece of literature, however, must be balanced against the creative license that would have been taken over years of transmission, as well as the alteration of historical fact to conform with tribal preferences and provide entertainment value to its intended audiences.

Herodotus

Herodotus was a Greek historian who was born in Halicarnassus (modern-day Bodrum, Turkey) and lived in the 5th century BCE. He was a contemporary of Socrates. He is referred to as "The Father of History" and is the first historian known to have broken from Homeric tradition in order to treat historical subjects as a method of investigation arranged into a historiographic narrative. His only known work is a history on the origins of the Greco-Persian Wars, entitled, *The Histories*. Herodotus states that he only reports that which was told to him, and some of his stories are fanciful and/or inaccurate; however, the majority of his information appears to be accurate.

Athenian tragic poets and storytellers appear to have provided heavy inspiration for Herodotus, as did Homer. Herodotus appears to have drawn on an Ionian tradition of storytelling, collecting and interpreting oral histories he happened upon during his travels in much the same way that oral poetry formed the basis for much of Homer's works. While these oral histories often contained folk-tale motifs and fed into a central moral, they also related verifiable facts relating to geography, anthropology, and history. For this reason, Herodotus drew criticism from his contemporaries, being touted as a mere storyteller and even a falsifier of information. In contrast to this type of approach, Thucydides, who had

been trained in rhetoric, provided a model of historical prose-writing based more firmly in factual progression of a narrative, whereas Herodotus, due to frequent digressions and asides, appeared to minimize his authorial control.

Thucydides

Thucydides was an Athenian historian and general. His *History of the Peloponnesian War* recounts the 5th century BCE war between Athens and Sparta. Thucydides is sometimes known as the father of "scientific history," or an early precursor to 20th century scientific positivism, because of his strict adherence to evidence-gathering and analysis of historical cause and effect without reference to divine intervention. He is also considered the father of political realism, which is a school of thought within the realm of political science that views the political behavior of individuals and the relations between states to be governed by self-interest and fear. More generally, Thucydides' texts show concern with understanding why individuals react the way they do during such crises as plague, massacres, and civil war.

Unlike Herodotus, Thucydides did not view his historical accounts as a source of moral lessons, but rather as a factual reporting of contemporary political and military events. Thucydides viewed life in political terms rather than moral terms, and viewed history in political terms. Thucydides also tended to omit, or at least downplay, geographic and ethnographic aspects of events from his work, whereas Herodotus recorded all information as part of the narrative. Thucydides' accounts are generally held to be more unambiguous and reliable than those of Herodotus. However, unlike his predecessor, Thucydides does not reveal his sources. Curiously, although subsequent Greek historians, such as Plutarch, held up Thucydides' writings as a model for scholars of their field, many of them continued to view history as a source of moral lessons, as did Herodotus.

Despite its heavy political slant, scholars cite strong literary and philosophical influences in Thucydides' work. In particular, the *History of the Peloponnesian War* echoes the narrative tradition of Homer, and draws heavily from epic poetry and tragedy to construct what is essentially a positivistic account of world events. Additionally, it brings to the forefront themes of justice and suffering in a similar manner to the philosophical texts of Aristotle and Plato.

5.5.3: Classical Greek Theater

Classical Greek theater, whether tragic or comic, has had great influence on modern literature and drama.

Learning Objective

- Describe the common themes found in classical Greek plays

Key Points

- The city-state of Athens was the center of cultural power during this period, and held a drama festival in honor of the god Dionysus, called the Dionysia.
- Two dramatic genres to emerge from this era of Greek theater were tragedy and comedy, both of which rose to prominence around 500-490 BCE.
- Greek tragedy is an extension of the ancient rites carried out in honor of Dionysus; it heavily influenced the theater of ancient Rome and the Renaissance.
- Tragic plots were often based upon myths from the oral traditions of archaic epics, and took the form of narratives presented by actors.
- Aeschylus was the first tragedian to codify the basic rules of tragic drama, and is considered by many to be the "father of tragedy."
- Athenian comedy is divided into three periods: Old Comedy, Middle Comedy, and New Comedy.

Key Terms

- **Chorus** – In the context of Greek theatre, a homogeneous, non-individualized group of performers who comment, with a collective voice, on dramatic action.
- **Deus ex machina** – A plot device whereby a seemingly unsolvable problem is suddenly and abruptly resolved by the unexpected intervention of some new event, character, ability, or object.
- **Monody** – In the context of ancient Greek theater and literature, lyric poetry sung by a single performer rather than by a chorus.

The theatrical culture of ancient Greece flourished from approximately 700 BCE onward.

The city-state of Athens was the center of cultural power during this period and held a drama festival in honor of the god Dionysus, called the Dionysia. This festival was

exported to many of Athens's numerous colonies to promote a common cultural identity

Boundless URL: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/catalog/boundlesscourses>



Edited 2018: Tillamook Bay Community College

across the empire. Two dramatic genres to emerge from this era of Greek theater were tragedy and comedy, both of which rose to prominence around 500-490 BCE.

Greek Tragedy

Sometimes referred to as Attic tragedy, Greek tragedy is an extension of the ancient rites carried out in honor of Dionysus, and it heavily influenced the theater of ancient Rome and the Renaissance. Tragic plots were often based upon myths from the oral traditions of archaic epics, and took the form of narratives presented by actors. Tragedies typically began with a prologue, in which one or more characters introduce the plot and explain the background to the ensuing story. The prologue is then followed by *paraodos*, after which the story unfolds through three or more episodes. The episodes are interspersed by *stasima*, or choral interludes that explain or comment on the situation that is developing. The tragedy then ends with an *exodus*, which concludes the story.

Aeschylus and the Codification of Tragic Drama

Aeschylus was the first tragedian to codify the basic rules of tragic drama. He is often described as the father of tragedy. He is credited with inventing the trilogy, a series of three tragedies that tell one long story. Trilogies were often performed in sequence over the course of a day, from sunrise to sunset. At the end of the last play, a satyr play was staged to revive the spirits of the public after they had witnessed the heavy events of the tragedy that had preceded it.

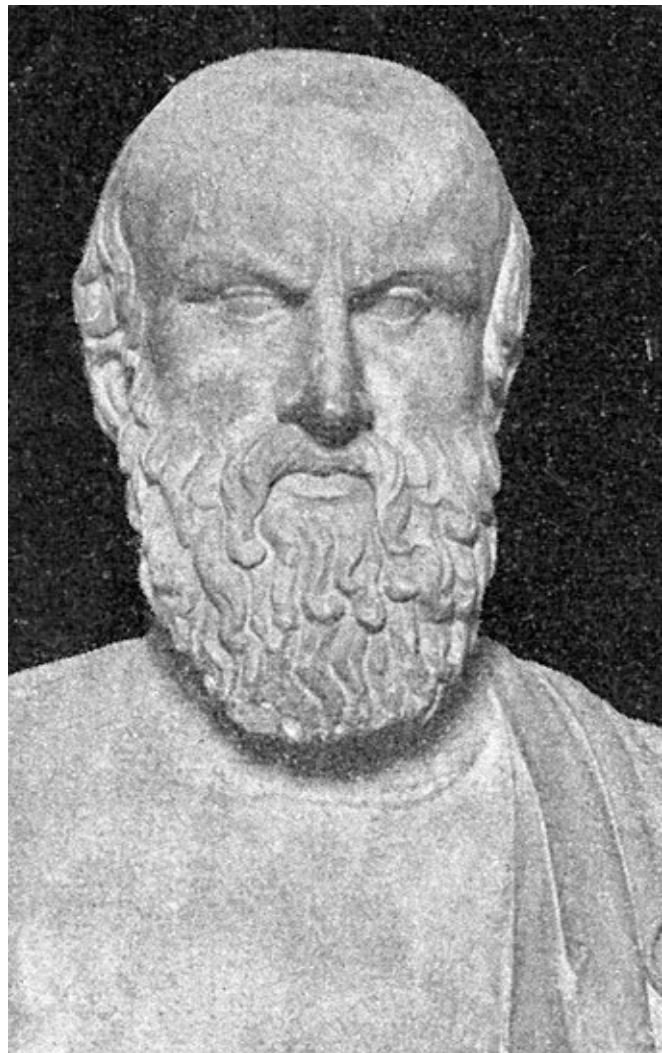


Figure 90 Marble bust of Aeschylus

According to Aristotle, Aeschylus also expanded the number of actors in theater to allow for the dramatization of conflict on stage. Previously, it was standard for only one character

to be present and interact with the homogeneous chorus, which commented in unison on the dramatic action unfolding on stage. Aeschylus's works show an evolution and enrichment in dialogue, contrasts, and theatrical effects over time, due to the rich competition that existed among playwrights of this era. Unfortunately, his plays, and those of Sophocles and Euripides, are the only works of classical Greek literature to have survived mostly intact, so there are not many rival texts to examine his works against.

The Reforms of Sophocles

Sophocles was one such rival who triumphed against the famous and previously unchallenged Aeschylus. Sophocles introduced a third actor to staged tragedies, increased the chorus to 15 members, broke the cycle of trilogies (making possible the production of independent dramas), and introduced the concept of scenery to theater. Compared to the works of Aeschylus, choruses in Sophocles' plays did less explanatory work, shifting the focus to deeper character development and staged conflict. The events that took place were often left unexplained or unjustified, forcing the audience to reflect upon the human condition.



Figure 91 Cast of Sophocles' bust in the Pushkin Museum

The Realism of Euripides

Euripides differs from Aeschylus and Sophocles in his search for technical experimentation and increased focus on feelings as a mechanism to elaborate the unfolding of tragic events. In Euripides' tragedies, there are three experimental aspects that reoccur. The first is the transition of the prologue to a monologue performed by an actor informing spectators of a story's background. The second is the introduction of *deus ex machina*, or a plot device whereby a seemingly unsolvable problem is suddenly and abruptly resolved

by the unexpected intervention of some new event, character, ability, or object. Finally, the use of a chorus was minimized in favor of a monody sung by the characters.



Figure 92 Statue of Euripides.

Another novelty introduced by Euripidean drama is the realism with which characters' psychological dynamics are portrayed. Unlike in Aeschylus or Sophocles' works, heroes in Euripides' plays were portrayed as insecure characters troubled by internal conflict rather than simply resolute. Female protagonists were also used to portray tormented sensitivity and irrational impulses that collided with the world of reason.

Greek Comedy

As Aristotle wrote in his *Poetics*, comedy is defined by the representation of laughable people, and involves some kind of blunder or ugliness that does not cause pain or disaster. Athenian comedy is divided into three periods: Old Comedy, Middle Comedy, and New Comedy. The Old Comedy period is largely represented by the 11 surviving plays of Aristophanes, whereas much of the work of the Middle Comedy period has been lost. New Comedy is known primarily by the substantial papyrus fragments of Menander. In general, the divisions between these periods is largely arbitrary, and ancient Greek comedy almost certainly developed constantly over the years.

Old Comedy and Aristophanes

Aristophanes, the most important Old Comic dramatist, wrote plays that abounded with political satire, as well as sexual and scatological innuendo. He lampooned the most important personalities and institutions of his day, including Socrates in *The Clouds*. His works are characterized as definitive to the genre of comedy even today.

Middle Comedy

Boundless URL: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/catalog/boundlesscourses>



Edited 2018: Tillamook Bay Community College

Although the line between Old and Middle Comedy is not clearly marked chronologically, there are some important thematic differences between the two. For instance, the role of the chorus in Middle Comedy was largely diminished to the point where it had no influence on the plot. Additionally, public characters were no longer impersonated or personified onstage, and objects of ridicule tended to be more general rather than personal, and in many instances, literary rather than political. For some time, mythological burlesque was popular among Middle Comic poets. Stock characters also were employed during this period. In-depth assessment and critique of the styling of Middle Comedy is difficult, given the lack of complete bodies of work. However, given the revival of this style in Sicily and Magna Graecia, it appears that the works of this period did have considerable widespread literary and social impact.

New Comedy

The style of New Comedy is comparable to what is contemporarily referred to as situation comedy or comedy of manners. The playwrights of Greek New Comedy built upon the devices, characters, and situations their predecessors had developed. Prologues to shape the audience's understanding of events, messengers' speeches to announce offstage action, and *ex machina* endings were all well-established tropes that were used in New Comedies. Satire and farce occupied less importance in the works of this time, and mythological themes and subjects were replaced by everyday concerns. Gods and goddesses were, at best, personified abstractions rather than actual characters, and no miracles or metamorphoses occurred. For the first time, love became a principal element in this type of theater.

Three playwrights are well known from this period: Menander, Philemon, and Diphilus. Menander was the most successful of the New Comedians. Menander's comedies focused on the fears and foibles of the ordinary man, as opposed to satirical accounts of political and public life, which perhaps lent to his comparative success within the genre. His comedies are the first to demonstrate the five-act structure later to become common in modern plays. Philemon's comedies dwell on philosophical issues, whereas Diphilus was noted for his use of farcical violence.

5.5.4: Classical Greek Architecture

Classical Greek architecture can be divided into three separate styles: the Doric Order, the Ionic Order, and the Corinthian Order.

Learning Objective

- Describe the distinguishing characteristics of Classical Greek Architecture

Key Points

- Classical Greek architecture is best represented by substantially intact ruins of temples and open-air theaters.
- The architectural style of classical Greece can be divided into three separate orders: the Doric Order, the Ionic Order, and the Corinthian Order. All three styles have had a profound impact on Western architecture of later periods.
- While the three orders of Greek architecture are most easily recognizable by their capitals, the orders also governed the form, proportions, details, and relationships of the columns, entablature, pediment, and stylobate.
- The Parthenon is considered the most important surviving building of classical Greece, and the zenith of Doric Order architecture.

Key Terms

- **Capitals** – In architecture, a capital forms the topmost member of a column.
- **Entablature** – An entablature is the superstructure of moldings and bands that lay horizontally above columns and rest on capitals.
- **Pediment** – A pediment is an element in classical, neoclassical, and baroque architecture that is placed above the horizontal structure of an entablature, and is typically supported by columns.
- **Stylobate** – In classical Greek architecture, a stylobate is the top step of a stepped platform upon which colonnades of temple columns are placed. In other words, the stylobate comprises the temple flooring.

Classical Greek architecture is highly formalized in structure and decoration, and is best known for its temples, many of which are found throughout the region as substantially intact ruins. Each classical Greek temple appears to have been conceived as a sculptural

entity within the landscape, and is usually raised on higher ground so that its proportions and the effects of light on its surface can be viewed from multiple angles. Open-air theaters are also an important type of building that survives throughout the Hellenic world, with the earliest dating from approximately 525-480 BCE.

Greek architectural style can be divided into three separate orders: the Doric Order, the Ionic Order, and the Corinthian Order. These styles have had a profound impact on Western architecture of later periods. In particular, the architecture of ancient Rome grew out of Greek architecture. Revivals of Classicism have also brought about renewed interest in the architectural styles of ancient Greece. While the three orders of Greek architecture are most easily recognizable by their capitals, the orders also governed the form, proportions, details, and relationships of the columns, entablature, pediment, and stylobate. Orders were applied to the whole range of buildings and monuments.

The Doric Order

The Doric Order developed on mainland Greece and spread to Italy. It is most easily recognized by its capital, which appears as a circular cushion placed on top of a column onto which a lintel rests. In early examples of the Doric Order, the cushion is splayed and flat, but over time, it became more refined, deeper, and with a greater curve.

Doric columns almost always feature fluting down the length of the column, numbering up to 20 flutes. The flutes meet at sharp edges, called arrises. Doric columns typically have no bases, with the exception of a few examples dating from the Hellenistic period.

Columns of an early Doric temple, such as the Temple of Apollo at Syracuse, could have a column height to an entablature ratio of 2:1, and a column height to a base diameter ratio of only 4:1. Later, a column height to a diameter ratio of 6:1 became more usual, and there is a column height to an entablature ratio at the Parthenon approximately 3:1.

Doric entablatures consist of three parts: the architrave, the frieze, and the cornice. The architrave is composed of stone lintels that span the space between columns. On top of this rests the frieze, one of the major areas of sculptural decoration. The frieze is divided into triglyphs and metopes. The triglyphs have three vertical grooves, similar to columnar fluting, and below them are guttae, small strips that appear to connect the triglyphs to the architrave below. The triglyphs are located above the center of each capital and the center

of each lintel.

Pediments in the Doric style were decorated with figures in relief in early examples; however, by the time the sculptures on the Parthenon were created, many pediment decorations were freestanding.

The Parthenon

The Parthenon is considered the most important surviving building of classical Greece and the zenith of Doric Order architecture. It is a former temple on the Athenian Acropolis dedicated to the patron goddess of Athens, Athena. Construction began on the Parthenon in 447 BCE, when the Athenian Empire was at its peak. Construction was completed in 438 BCE, but decoration of the building continued until 432 BCE. Although most architectural elements of the Parthenon belong to the Doric Order, a continuous sculptured frieze in low relief that sits above the architrave belongs to the Ionic style.



Figure 93 The Parthenon under restoration in 2008.

The Ionic Order

The Ionic Order coexisted with the Doric Order and was favored by Greek cities in Ionia, Asia Minor, and the Aegean Islands. It did not evolve into a clearly defined style until the mid-5th century BCE. Early Ionic temples in Asia Minor were particularly ambitious in scale.

The Ionic Order is most easily identified by its voluted capital. The cushion placed on top of the column is similarly shaped to that of the Doric Order, but is decorated with a stylized ornament and surmounted by a horizontal band that scrolls under to either side.

Ionic Order columns are fluted with narrow, shallow flutes that do not meet at a sharp edge, but have a flat band between them. The usual number of flutes is 24, but there can be as many as 44. The architrave is not always decorated, but more often it rises in three

outwardly-stepped bands. The frieze runs in a continuous band and is separated from



Figure 94 Corner capital in the Ionic style with a diagonal volute, showing also details of the fluting separated by fillets.

other members by rows of small projecting blocks.

The Ionic Order is lighter in appearance than the Doric Order, with columns that have a 9:1 ratio, and the diameter and the whole entablature appears much narrower and less heavy than those of the Doric. Decorations were distributed with some variation, and Ionic entablatures often featured formalized bands of motifs. The

external frieze often contained a continuous band of figurative sculpture of ornament, though this was not always the case. Caryatids—draped female figures used as supporting members to the entablature—were also a feature of the Ionic Order.

The Corinthian Order

The Corinthian Order grew directly from the Ionic in the mid-5th century BCE, and was initially of a very similar style and proportion, with the only distinguishing factor being its more ornate capitals. The capitals of the Corinthian Order were much deeper than those of the Doric and Ionic Orders. They were shaped like a bell-shaped mixing bowl and ornamented with a double row of acanthus leaves above which rose splayed, voluted tendrils. The ratio of column height to diameter of the Corinthian Order is generally 10:1, with the capital taking up more than a tenth of the height. The ratio of capital height to diameter is generally about 1:16:1.

Initially the Corinthian Order was used internally in such sites as the Temple of Apollo Epicurius at Bassae. By the late 300s, features of the Corinthian Order began to be used externally at sites such as the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates and the Temple of Zeus Olympia, both in Athens. During the Hellenistic period, Corinthian columns were sometimes built without fluting. The Corinthian Order became popular among the Romans, who added a number of refinements and decorative details.

5.5.5: Scientific Advancements in the Classical Period

The Hellenistic Period witnessed significant scientific advancements, due to the mixing of Greek and Asian culture and royal patronage.

Learning Objective

- Describe the various scientific advancements made during the Hellenistic period

Key Points

- Great seats of learning rose during the Hellenistic Period, including those at Alexandria and Antioch.
- Scientific inquiries were often sponsored by royal patrons.
- The discoveries of several Greek mathematicians, including Pythagoras and Euclid, are still used in mathematical teaching today. Important developments include the basic rules of geometry, the idea of a formal mathematical proof, and discoveries in number theory, mathematical analysis, and applied mathematics.
- The Greeks also developed the field of astronomy, which they treated as a branch of mathematics to a highly sophisticated level.
- Hippocrates was a physician of the classical period, and is considered one of the most outstanding figures in the history of medicine. Most notably, he founded the Hippocratic School of medicine, which revolutionized medicine in ancient Greece by establishing it as a discipline distinct from other fields, and making medicine a profession.

Key Terms

- **Hellenistic period** – The period of ancient Greek and Mediterranean history between the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BCE and the emergence of the Roman Empire, as signified by the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE.
- **Alexandria** – An important seat of learning within the Hellenistic civilization and the capital of Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine Egypt for almost 1,000 years, until the Muslim conquest of Egypt in 641 CE.

Hellenistic Culture

Hellenistic culture produced seats of learning in Alexandria, Egypt and Antioch, Syria,

along with Greek- speaking populations across several monarchies. Hellenistic science differed from Greek science in at least two ways. First, it benefited from the cross-fertilization of Greek ideas with those that had developed in the larger Hellenistic world.



Figure 95 *The Great Library of Alexandria*, O. Von Corven. 19th century.

Secondly, to some extent, it was supported by royal patrons in the kingdoms founded by Alexander's successors.

Especially important to Hellenistic science was the city of Alexandria in Egypt, which became a major center of scientific research in the 3rd century BCE. Two institutions established there during the reigns of Ptolemy I Soter (reigned 323-283 BCE) and Ptolemy II Philadelphus (reigned 281-246 BCE) were the Library and the Museum. Unlike Plato's Academy

and Aristotle's Lyceum, these institutions were officially supported by the Ptolemies, although the extent of patronage could be precarious, depending on the policies of the current ruler.

Mathematics and Astronomy

The discoveries of several Greek mathematicians, including Pythagoras and Euclid, are still used in mathematical teaching today. Important developments include the basic rules of geometry, the idea of a formal mathematical proof, and discoveries in number theory, mathematical analysis, and applied mathematics. Ancient Greek mathematicians also came close to establishing integral calculus.

The Greeks also developed the field of astronomy, which they treated as a branch of mathematics, to a highly sophisticated level. The first geometrical, three-dimensional models to explain the apparent motion of the planets was developed in the 4th century BCE, by Eudoxus of Cnidus and Callippus of Cyzicus. Their younger contemporary, Heraclides Ponticus, proposed that the Earth rotates around its axis. In the 3rd century

BCE, Aristarchus of Samos was the first to suggest a heliocentric system. In the 2nd century BCE, Hipparchus of Nicea made a number of contributions, including the first measurement of precession and the compilation of the first star catalog, in which he proposed the modern system of apparent magnitudes.

The Antikythera mechanism, a device for calculating the movements of the planets, was the first ancestor of the astronomical computer. It dates from about 80 BCE, and was discovered in an ancient shipwreck off the Greek island of Antikythera. The device became famous for its use of a differential gear, which was previously believed to have been invented in the 16th century, as well as the miniaturization and complexity of its parts, which has been compared to that of clocks produced in the 18th century.

The Medical Field

The ancient Greeks also made important discoveries in the medical field. Hippocrates was a physician of the classical period, and is considered one of the most outstanding figures in the history of medicine. He is sometimes even referred to as the "father of medicine." Most notably, he founded the Hippocratic School of medicine, which revolutionized medicine in ancient Greece by establishing it as a discipline distinct from other fields, and making medicine a profession.

Other notable Hellenistic scientists and their achievements include:

- Herophilos (335-280 BCE), who was the first to base medical conclusions on dissection of the human body and to describe the nervous system
- Archimedes (c. 287-212 BCE), a geometer, physicist, and engineer who laid the foundations of hydrostatics and statics, and explained the principle of the lever
- Eratosthenes (c. 276 BCE-195/194 BCE), who measured the distance between the Sun and the Earth, as well as the size of the Earth

Attributions

- Classical Greek Philosophy
 - "Aporia." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aporia>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Plato." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plato>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.

- "Ancient Greek Philosophy." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classical_Greek_philosophy%23Classical_Greek_philosophy. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
- "Socrates." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socrates>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
- "Allegory of the Cave." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allegory_of_the_cave. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Peripatetic school." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peripatetic_school. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Aristotle." <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Aristotle>. Wiktionary CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Plato." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plato%23mediaviewer/File:Plato_Silanion_Musei_Capitolini_MC Wikipedia CC BY 2.5.
- "Aristotle." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aristotle%23mediaviewer/File:Aristotle_Altemps_Invent0575.jpg. Wikipedia Public domain.
- "Socrates." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socrates%23mediaviewer/File:Socrates_Louvre.jpg. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 2.5.
- Classical Greek Poetry and History
 - "Thucydides." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thucydides>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Iliad." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iliad>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Dactylic Hexameter." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dactylic_hexameter. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Homer." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homer>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Herodotus." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herodotus>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Homer." http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/1c/Homer_British_Museum.jpg. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
- Classical Greek Theater
 - "Greek chorus." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_chorus. Wikipedia CC

BY-SA 3.0.

- "Deus ex machina." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deus_ex_machina.
Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Aeschylus." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aeschylus>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Theatre of ancient Greece."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theatre_of_ancient_Greece. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Ancient Greek comedy."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greek_comedy. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Greek tragedy." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_tragedy. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Monody." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monody>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Euripides_Statue.jpg."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Euripides_Statue.jpg. Wikimedia Public domain.
- "Sophocles_pushkin.jpg."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sophocles_pushkin.jpg. Wikimedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Aischylos_BC3BCste.jpg."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Aischylos_B%C3%BCste.jpg.
Wikimedia Public domain.
- Classical Greek Architecture
 - "Ancient Greek architecture."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greek_architecture. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Capital (architecture)." [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capital_\(architecture\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capital_(architecture)).
Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Pediment." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pediment>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Entablature." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Entablature>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- "Parthenon." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parthenon>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Stylobate." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stylobate>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Erechteion_-_chapiteau.jpg." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Erechteion_-_chapiteau.jpg. Wikipedia GNU FDL 1.2.
- "Parthenon-2008_entzertr.jpg." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Parthenon-2008_entzertr.jpg. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- Scientific Advancements in the Classical Period
 - "Ancient Greece." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greece. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Hellenistic Period." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenistic_period%23Culture. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Archimedes." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archimedes>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Hellenistic Period." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenistic_period%23Philosophy. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Eratosthenes." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eratosthenes>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Library of Alexandria." <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ancientlibraryalex.jpg>. Wikimedia Public domain.

5.6: The Peloponnesian War

5.6.1: Introduction to the Peloponnesian War

The Peloponnesian War provided a dramatic end to the 5th century BCE, shattering religious and cultural taboos, devastating vast swathes of countryside, and destroying whole cities.

Learning Objective

- Describe the events of the Peloponnesian War

Key Points

- The Peloponnesian War (431-404 BCE) was fought between Athens and its empire, known as the Delian League, and the Peloponnesian League, led by Sparta.
- During this conflict, Greek warfare evolved from an originally limited and formalized form of conflict, to all-out struggles between city-states, with large-scale atrocities.
- During the first phase, known as the Archidamian War, Sparta launched repeated invasions of Attica while Athens took advantage of its naval supremacy to raid the Peloponnesian coast.
- Initially Athens' strategy, as guided by Pericles, was to avoid open battle with the more numerous and better trained Spartan hoplites, and to instead rely on Athens' superior naval fleet.
- In the aftermath of a devastating plague, Athenians turned against Pericles's defensive strategy in favor of a more aggressive one that would bring war directly to Sparta and its allies.
- The Peace of Nicias was signed in 421 BCE, and concluded the first phase of the war. The treaty was undermined, however, by continued fighting and calls for revolt throughout the Peloponnesian.
- The destruction of Athens' fleet at Aegospotami during the Decelean War effectively ended the Peloponnesian War. Athens surrendered a year later in 404 BCE.

Key Terms

- **Hoplites** – Hoplites were citizen-soldiers of Ancient Greek city-states who were primarily armed with spears and shields.

Boundless URL: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/catalog/boundlesscourses>



Edited 2018: Tillamook Bay Community College

- **Helot** – Helots were a subjugated population group that formed the main population of Laconia and Messenia, the territories controlled by Sparta.

The Peloponnesian War (431-404 BCE) was fought between Athens and its empire, known as the Delian League, and the Peloponnesian League, led by Sparta. During this conflict, Greek warfare evolved from an originally limited and formalized form of conflict, to all-out struggles between city-states, complete with large-scale atrocities. The Peloponnesian War provided a dramatic end to the 5th century BCE, shattering religious and cultural taboos, devastating vast swathes of countryside, and destroying whole cities. Historians have traditionally divided the war into several different phases.

The Archidamian War

During the first phase, known as the Archidamian War, Sparta launched repeated invasions of Attica while Athens took advantage of its naval supremacy to raid the Peloponnesian coast. Sparta and its allies, with the exception of Corinth, were almost exclusively land-based powers, whereas the Athens Empire, though based on a peninsula, had developed impressive naval power. As a result, the two powers were relatively unable to fight decisive battles. The Spartan strategy during the Archidamian War was to invade



Figure 96 The walls protecting Athens during the Peloponnesian War.

the land surrounding Athens, depriving Athenians of the productive land around their city. However, Athens maintained access to the sea and did not suffer much from this strategy, though many citizens of Attica abandoned their farms and moved inside the long walls connecting Athens to port Piraeus.

Initially Athens' strategy, as guided by Pericles, was to avoid open battle with the more numerous, and better trained

Spartan hoplites, and to instead rely on Athens' superior fleet. As a result, Athens' fleet went on the offensive, winning a victory at Naupactus. Their victory was short-lived, however, because in 430 BCE, an outbreak of plague hit Athens, ravaging the densely

packed city and wiping out over 30,000 citizens, sailors, and soldiers, which amounted to roughly one-third to two-thirds of the Athenian population. As a result, Athenian manpower was drastically reduced, and due to widespread fears of plague, foreign mercenaries refused to hire themselves out to Athens. Sparta also abandoned its invasion of Attica during this time, unwilling to risk contact with their diseased enemy.

Pericles and his sons perished as a result of plague, and in the aftermath, Athenians turned against Pericles's defensive strategy in favor of a more aggressive one that would bring war directly to Sparta and its allies. Initially this strategy met with some success as Athens pursued naval raids throughout the Peloponnese. Their successes allowed them to fortify posts throughout the Peloponnese. One such post was near Pylos, on a tiny island called Sphacteria. It began attracting helot runaways from Sparta, which in turn raised Spartan fears that Athenian activities throughout the Peloponnese would incite a mass helot revolt. As a result, the Spartans were driven into action. During the ensuing conflicts, 300 to 400 Spartans were taken hostage, providing Athens with a bargaining chip.

In return, the Spartans raised an army of allies and helots and marched the length of Greece to the Athenian colony of Amphipolis, which controlled several nearby silver mines. These mines were particularly important because they provided much of the money that financed the Athenian war effort. The capture of this colony provided Sparta a bargaining chip as well, and the two rival city-states agreed to sign a truce, exchanging the Spartan hostages for Amphipolis and its silver mines.

Peace of Nicias

The Peace of Nicias was signed in 421 BCE, concluding the first phase of the war. Due to the loss of war hawks in both city-states during the previous conflict, the peace endured for approximately six years. The treaty was undermined, however, by continued fighting and calls for revolt throughout the Peloponnese.

Although the Spartans refrained from such actions themselves, their allies remained vocal, particularly Argos. The Athenians supported the Argives and encouraged them to form a coalition of democratic states within the Peloponnese and separate from Sparta. Early Spartan attempts to thwart such a coalition ultimately failed, and the Argives, their allies, and a small Athenian force moved to seize the city of Tegea, near Sparta.

The Battle of Mantinea was the largest land battle fought within Greece during the Peloponnesian War. The Argive allied coalition initially utilized the sheer strength of their combined forces to score early successes, but failed to capitalize on them, providing the elite Spartan forces opportunities to defeat the coalition and save their city from a strategic defeat. The Argive democratic alliance was broken up, and most members were reincorporated into Sparta's Peloponnesian League, reestablishing Spartan hegemony throughout the region.

The Sicilian Expedition

During the 17th year of war, Athens received news that one of their distant allies in Sicily was under attack from Syracuse. The people of Syracuse were ethnically Dorian like the Spartans, and Sicily and their allies, the Athenians, were ethnically Ionian. In 415 BCE, Athens dispatched a massive expeditionary force to attack Syracuse in Sicily. The Athenian force consisted of more than 100 ships, approximately 5,000 infantry, and lightly armored troops. However, their cavalry was limited to about 30 horses, which proved to be no match for the large and highly trained Syracusan cavalry.

Meanwhile, the Syracusans petitioned Sparta for assistance in the matter, and Sparta sent their general, Gylippus, to Sicily with reinforcements. Subsequent Athenian attacks failed and Athens' entire force was destroyed by 413 BCE.

The Second War

This ushered in the final phase of the war, known as the Decelean War, or the Ionian War. By this time, Sparta was receiving support from Persia, and Sparta bolstered rebellions in Athens' Aegean Sea and Ionian subject states, in order to undermine Athens Empire. This eventually led to the erosion of Athens' naval supremacy. The Lacedaemonians were no longer content with simply sending aid to Sicily as a means of supporting their ally.

Instead, their focus shifted to an offensive strategy against Athens. As a result, Decelea, a town near Athens, was fortified in order to prevent the Athenians from making use of their land year-round, and to thwart overland shipments of supplies. Nearby silver mines were also disrupted, with Spartan hoplites freeing as many as 20,000 Athenian slaves in the vicinity. Due to this disruption in finance, Athens was forced to demand increased tribute from its subject allies, further increasing tension and the threat of rebellion throughout the

Athenian empire.

Members of the Peloponnesian League continued to send reinforcements to Syracuse in hopes of driving off the Athenians, but instead, Athens sent another 100 ships and 5,000 troops to Sicily. Gylippus' forces, combined with those of the Syracusans, defeated the Athenians on land. The destruction of Athens' fleet at Aegospotami effectively ended the war, and Athens surrendered a year later in 404 BCE. Corinth and Thebes demanded that Athens be destroyed and all its citizens enslaved, but Sparta refused to destroy a city that had done good service at a time of great danger to Greece, and took Athens into their own alliance system.

5.6.2: Effects of the Peloponnesian War

Following the Peloponnesian War, Athens underwent a period of harsh oligarchic governance and Sparta enjoyed a brief hegemonic period.

Learning Objective

- Understand the effects of the Peloponnesian War on the Greek city-states

Key Points

- The Peloponnesian War ended in victory for Sparta and its allies, but signaled the demise of Athenian naval and political hegemony throughout the Mediterranean.
- Democracy in Athens was briefly overthrown in 411 BCE as a result of its poor handling of the Peloponnesian War. Lysander, the Spartan admiral who commanded the Spartan fleet at Aegospotami in 405 BCE, helped to organize the Thirty Tyrants as Athens' government for the 13 months they maintained power.
- Lysander established many pro-Spartan governments throughout the Aegean, where the ruling classes were more loyal to him than to Sparta as a whole. Eventually Spartan kings, Agis and Pausanias, abolished these Aegean decarchies, curbing Lysander's political influence.
- Agesilaus II was one of two Spartan kings during the period of Spartan hegemony, and is remembered for his multiple campaigns in the eastern Aegean and Persian territories.
- Agesilaus's loss at the Battle of Leuctra effectively ended Spartan hegemony

throughout the region.

Key Terms

- **Hegemony** – The political, economic, or military predominance or control of one state over others.
- **Harmosts** – A Spartan term for a military governor.
- **Oligarchy** – A form of power structure in which a small group of people hold all power and influence in a state.

The Peloponnesian War ended in victory for Sparta and its allies, and led directly to the rising naval power of Sparta. However, it marked the demise of Athenian naval and political hegemony throughout the Mediterranean. The destruction from the Peloponnesian War weakened and divided the Greeks for years to come, eventually allowing the Macedonians an opportunity to conquer them in the mid-4th century BCE.

Athens

Democracy in Athens was briefly overthrown in 411 BCE as a result of its poor handling of the Peloponnesian War. Citizens reacted against Athens' defeat, blaming democratic politicians, such as Cleon and Cleophon. The Spartan army encouraged revolt, installing a pro-Spartan oligarchy within Athens, called the Thirty Tyrants, in 404 BCE. Lysander, the Spartan admiral who commanded the Spartan fleet at Aegospotami in 405 BCE, helped to organize the Thirty Tyrants as a government for the 13 months they maintained power.

During the Thirty Tyrants' rule, five percent of the Athenian population was killed, private property was confiscated, and democratic supporters were exiled. The Thirty appointed a council of 500 to serve the judicial functions that had formerly belonged to all citizens. Despite all this, not all Athenian men had their rights removed. In fact, 3,000 such men were chosen by the Thirty to share in the government of Athens. These men were permitted to carry weapons, entitled to jury trial, and allowed to reside within the city limits. This list of men was constantly being revised, and selection was most likely a reflection of loyalty to the regime, with the majority of Athenians not supporting the Thirty Tyrants' rule.

Nonetheless, the Thirty's regime was not met with much overt opposition for the majority of their rule, as a result of the harsh penalties placed on dissenters. Eventually, the level of violence and brutality carried out by the Thirty in Athens led to increased opposition,

stemming primarily from a rebel group of exiles led by Thrasybulus, a former trierarch in the Athenian navy. The increased opposition culminated in a revolution that ultimately overthrew the Thirty's regime. In the aftermath, Athens gave amnesty to the 3,000 men who were given special treatment under the regime, with the exception of those who comprised the governing Thirty and their associated governmental officials. Athens struggled to recover from the upheaval caused by the Thirty Tyrants in the years that followed.

Sparta

As a result of the Peloponnesian War, Sparta, which had primarily been a continental culture, became a naval power. At its peak, Sparta overpowered many key Greek states, including the elite Athenian navy. By the end of the 5th century BCE, Sparta's successes against the Athenian Empire and ability to invade Persian provinces in Anatolia ushered in a period of Spartan hegemony. This hegemonic period was to be short-lived, however.

Lysander

After the end of the Peloponnesian War, Lysander established many pro-Spartan governments throughout the Aegean. Most of the ruling systems set up by Lysander were ten-man oligarchies, called decarchies, in which harmosts, Spartan military governors, were the heads of the government. Because Lysander appointed from within the ruling classes of these governments, the men were more loyal to Lysander than Sparta, making these Aegean outposts similar to a private empire.

Lysander and Spartan king Agis were in agreement with Corinth and Thebes that Athens should be totally destroyed in the aftermath of the Peloponnesian War, but they were opposed by a more moderate faction, headed by Pausanias. Eventually,



Figure 97 A 16th century engraving of Lysander.

Pausanias' moderate faction gained the upper hand and Athens was spared, though its defensive walls and port fortifications at Piraeus were demolished. Lysander also managed to require Athens to recall its exiles, causing political instability within the city-state, of which Lysander took advantage to establish the oligarchy that came to be known as the Thirty Tyrants. Because Lysander was also directly involved in the selection of the Thirty, these men were loyal to him over Sparta, causing King Agis and King Pausanias to agree to the abolishment of his Aegean decarchies, and eventually the restoration of democracy in Athens, which quickly curbed Lysander's political influence.

Agesilaus and His Campaigns

Agesilaus II was one of two Spartan kings during the period of Spartan hegemony.

Lysander was one of Agesilaus's biggest supporters, and was even a mentor. During his kingship, Agesilaus embarked on a number of military campaigns in the eastern Aegean and Persian territories. During these campaigns, the Spartans under Agesilaus's command met with numerous rebelling Greek poleis, including the Thebans. The Thebans, Argives, Corinthians, and Athenians had rebelled during the Corinthian War from 395-386 BCE, and the Persians aided the Thebans, Corinthians, and Athenians against the Spartans.

During the winter of 379/378 BCE, a group of Theban exiles snuck into Thebes and succeeded in liberating it, despite resistance from a 1,500-strong Spartan garrison. This led to a number of Spartan expeditions against Thebes, known as The Boeotian War. The Greek city-states eventually attempted to broker peace, but Theban diplomat Epaminondas angered Agesilaus by arguing for the freedom of non-Spartan citizens within Laconia. As a result, Agesilaus excluded the Thebans from the treaty, and the Battle of Leuctra broke out in 371 BCE; the Spartans eventually lost. Sparta's international political influence precipitated quickly after their defeat.

Attributions

- Introduction to the Peloponnesian War
 - "Hoplite." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hoplite>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Helots." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helots>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Peloponnesian War." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peloponnesian_War.

Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- "Peloponnesian_War2C_Walls_Protecting_the_City2C_431_B.C..JPG." https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Peloponnesian_War,_Walls_Protecting_the_City,_431 Wikimedia Public domain.
- Effects of the Peloponnesian War
 - "Harmost." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harmost>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "History of Athens." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Athens. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Oligarchy." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oligarchy>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Spartan hegemony." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spartan_hegemony. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Lysander." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lysander>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Sparta." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sparta>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Boeotian War." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boeotian_War. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Hegemony." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hegemony>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Peloponnesian War." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peloponnesian_War. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Lysander-Sparta.jpg." <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lysander-Sparta.jpg>. Wikimedia Public domain.

5.7: Macedonian Conquest

5.7.1: The Rise of the Macedon

Philip II's conquests during the Third Sacred War cemented his power, as well as the influence of Macedon, throughout the Hellenic world.

Learning Objective

- Describe Philip II's achievements and how he built up Macedon

Key Points

- The military skills Philip II learned while in Thebes, coupled with his expansionist vision of Macedonian greatness, brought him early successes when he ascended to the throne in 359 BCE.
- Philip earned immense prestige, and secured Macedon's position in the Hellenic world during his involvement in the Third Sacred War, which began in Greece in 356 BCE.
- War with Athens would arise intermittently for the duration of Philip's campaigns, due to conflicts over land, and/or with allies.
- In 337 BCE, Philip created and led the League of Corinth, a federation of Greek states that aimed to invade the Persian Empire.
- In 336 BCE, Philip was assassinated during the earliest stages of the League of Corinth's Persian venture.
- Many Macedonian institutions and demonstrations of power mirrored established Achaemenid conventions.

Key Term

- **Sarissas** – A long spear or pike about 13-20 feet in length, used in ancient Greek and Hellenistic warfare, which was initially introduced by Philip II of Macedon.

Macedon rose from a small kingdom on the periphery of classical Greek affairs, to a dominant player in the Hellenic world and beyond, within the span of 25 years between 359 and 336 BCE. Macedon's rise is largely attributable to the policies during Philip II's rule.

Background

In the aftermath of the Peloponnesian War, Sparta rose as a hegemonic power in classical Greece. Sparta's dominance was challenged by many Greek city-states who had traditionally been independent during the Corinthian War of 395-387 BCE. Sparta prevailed in the conflict, but only because Persia intervened on their behalf, demonstrating the fragility with which Sparta held its power over the other Greek city-states. In the next decade, the Thebans revolted against Sparta, successfully liberating their city-state, and later defeating the Spartans at the Battle of Leuctra (371 BCE). Theban general Epaminondas then led an invasion of the Peloponnesus in 370 BCE, invaded Messenia, and liberated the helots, permanently crippling Sparta.

These series of events allowed the Thebans to replace Spartan hegemonic power with their own. For the next nine years, Epaminondas and Theban general Pelopidas further extended Theban power and influence via a series of campaigns throughout Greece, bringing almost every city-state in Greece into the conflict. These years of war ultimately left Greece war-weary and depleted, and during Epaminondas's fourth invasion of the Peloponnesus in 362 BCE, Epaminondas was killed at the Battle of Mantinea.

Although Thebes emerged victorious, their losses were heavy, and the Thebans returned to a defensive policy, allowing Athens to reclaim its position at the center of the Greek political system for the first

time since the Peloponnesian War. The Athenians' second confederacy would be Macedon's main rivals for control of the lands of the north Aegean.

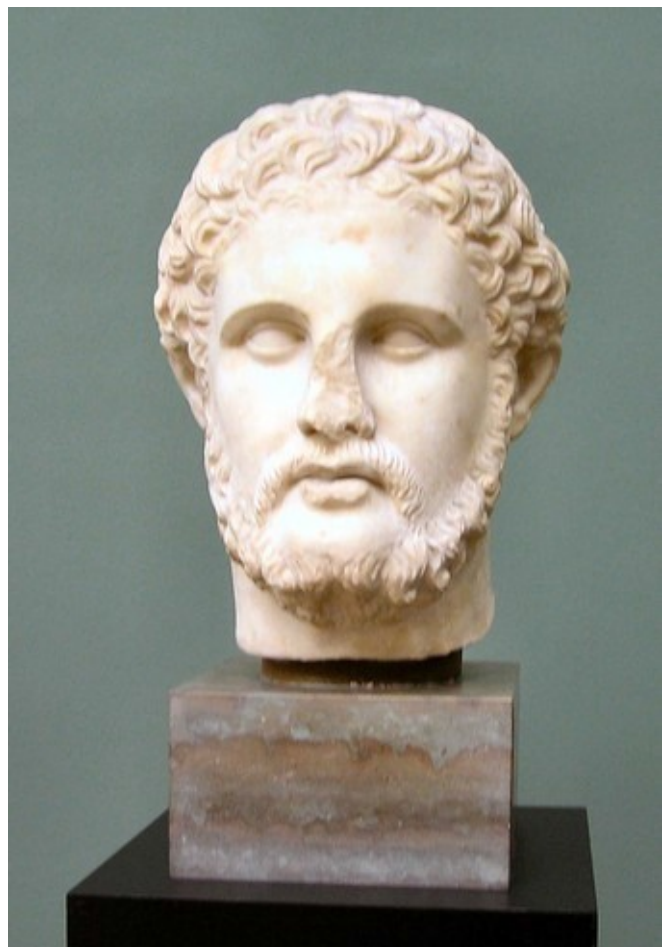


Figure 98 Philip II of Macedon.

Philip II's Accession

While Philip was young, he was held hostage in Thebes, and received a military and diplomatic education from Epaminondas. By 364 BCE, Philip returned to Macedon, and the skills he learned while in Thebes, coupled with his expansionist vision of Macedonian greatness, brought him early successes when he ascended to the throne in 359 BCE. When he assumed the throne, the eastern regions of Macedonia had been sacked and invaded by the Paionians, and the Thracians and the Athenians had landed a contingent on the coast at Methoni. Philip pushed the Paionians and Thracians back, promising them tributes, and defeated the 3,000 Athenian hoplites at Methoni. In the interim between conflicts, Philip focused on strengthening his army and his overall position domestically, introducing the phalanx infantry corps and arming them with long spears, called sarissas.

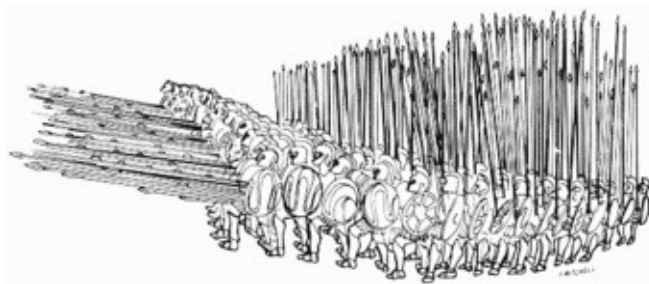


Figure 99 A Macedonian Phalanx.

In 358 BCE, Philip marched against the Illyrians, establishing his authority inland as far as Lake Ohrid. Subsequently, he agreed to lease the gold mines of Mount Pangaion to the Athenians in exchange for the return of the city of Pydna to Macedon.

Ultimately, after conquering Amphipolis in 357 BCE, he reneged on his agreement, which led to war with Athens. During that conflict, Philip conquered Potidaea, but ceded it to the Chalkidian League of Olynthus, with which he was allied. A year later, he also conquered Crenides and changed its name to Philippi, using the gold from the mines there to finance subsequent campaigns.

Third Sacred War

Philip earned immense prestige and secured Macedon's position in the Hellenic world during his involvement in the Third Sacred War, which began in Greece in 356 BCE. Early in the war, Philip defeated the Thessalians at the Battle of Crocus Field, allowing him to acquire Pherae and Magnesia, which was the location of an important harbor, Pagasae. He did not attempt to advance further into central Greece, however, because the Athenians occupied Thermopylae. Although there were no open hostilities between the Athenians and Macedonians at the time, tensions had arisen as a result of Philip's recent land and resource acquisitions. Instead, Philip focused on subjugating the Balkan hill-

country in the west and north, and attacking Greek coastal cities, many of which Philip maintained friendly relations with, until he had conquered their surrounding territories. Nonetheless, war with Athens would arise intermittently for the duration of Philip's campaigns, due to conflicts over land and/or with allies.

Persian Influences

For many Macedonian rulers, the Achaemenid Empire in Persia was a major sociopolitical influence, and Philip II was no exception. Many institutions and demonstrations of his power mirrored established Achaemenid conventions. For example, Philip established a Royal Secretary and Archive, as well as the institution of Royal Pages, which would mount the king on his horse in a manner very similar to the way in which Persian kings were mounted. He also aimed to make his power both political and religious in nature, utilizing a special throne stylized after those of the Achaemenid court, to demonstrate his elevated rank. Achaemenid administrative practices were also utilized in Macedonia rule of conquered lands, such as Thrace in 342-334 BCE.

In 337 BCE, Philip created and led the League of Corinth. Members of the league agreed not to engage in conflict with one another unless their aim was to suppress revolution. Another stated aim of the league was to invade the Persian Empire. Ironically, in 336 BCE, Philip was assassinated during the earliest stages of the Persian venture, during the marriage of his daughter Cleopatra to Alexander I of Epirus.

5.7.2: Alexander the Great

In a little over 30 years, Alexander the Great created one of the largest empires in the ancient world, using his military and tactical genius.

Learning Objective

- Examine Alexander the Great's successes and failures

Key Points

- Alexander the Great spent most of his ruling years on an unprecedented military campaign through Asia and northeast Africa. By the age of 30, he created an empire that stretched from Greece to Egypt, and into present-day Pakistan.
- Alexander inherited a strong kingdom and experienced army, both of which

contributed to his successes.

- Alexander's legacy includes the cultural diffusion his engendered conquests, and the rise of Hellenistic culture as a result of his military campaigns.
- Alexander's impressive record was largely due to his smart use of terrain, phalanx and cavalry tactics, bold and adaptive strategy, and the fierce loyalty of his troops.

Key Terms

- **Philip II** – A king of the Greek kingdom of Macedon from 359 BCE until his assassination in 336 BCE. He was the father of Alexander the Great.
- **Alexander the Great** – Formally Alexander III of Macedon, a Macedonian king who was undefeated in battle and is considered one of history's most successful commanders.
- **Phalanx** – A rectangular mass military formation, usually composed entirely of heavy infantry armed with spears, pikes, sarissas, or similar weapons.

Following the decline of the Greek city-states, the Greek kingdom of Macedon rose to power under Philip II. Alexander III, commonly known as Alexander the Great, was born to Philip II in Pella in 356 BCE, and succeeded his father to the throne at the age of 20. He spent most of his ruling years on an unprecedented military campaign through Asia and northeast Africa, and by the age of 30, had created one of the largest empires of the ancient world, which stretched from Greece to Egypt and into present-day Pakistan. He was undefeated in battle and is considered one of history's most successful commanders.



Figure 100 Alexander the Great

During his youth, Alexander was tutored

by the philosopher Aristotle, until the age of 16. When he succeeded his father to the throne in 336 BCE, after Philip was assassinated, Alexander inherited a strong kingdom and an experienced army. He had been awarded the generalship of Greece, and used this authority to launch his father's military expansion plans. In 334 BCE, he invaded the Achaemenid Empire, ruled Asia Minor, and began a series of campaigns that lasted ten years. Alexander broke the power of Persia in a series of decisive battles, most notably the battles of Issus and Gaugamela. He overthrew the Persian King Darius III, and conquered the entirety of the Persian Empire. At that point, his empire stretched from the Adriatic Sea to the Indus River.

Seeking to reach the "ends of the world and the Great Outer Sea," he invaded India in 326 BCE, but was eventually forced to turn back at the demand of his troops. Alexander died in Babylon in 323 BCE, the city he planned to establish as his capital, without executing a series of planned campaigns that would have begun with an invasion of Arabia. In the years following his death, a series of civil wars tore his empire apart, resulting in several states ruled by the Diadochi, Alexander's surviving generals and heirs. Alexander's legacy includes the cultural diffusion his engendered conquests. He founded some 20 cities that bore his name, the most notable being Alexandria in Egypt. Alexander's settlement of Greek colonists, and the spread of Greek culture in the east, resulted in a new Hellenistic civilization, aspects of which were still evident in the traditions of the Byzantine Empire in the mid-15th century. Alexander became legendary as a classical hero in the mold of Achilles, and he features prominently in the history and myth of Greek and non-Greek cultures. He became the measure against which military leaders compared themselves, and military academies throughout the world still teach his tactics.

Military Generalship

Alexander earned the honorific epithet "the Great" due to his unparalleled success as a military commander. He never lost a battle, despite typically being outnumbered. His impressive record was largely due to his smart use of terrain, phalanx and cavalry tactics, bold strategy, and the fierce loyalty of his troops. The Macedonian phalanx, armed with the sarissa, a spear up to 20 feet long, had been developed and perfected by Alexander's father, Philip II. Alexander used its speed and maneuverability to great effect against larger, but more disparate, Persian forces. Alexander also recognized the potential for

disunity among his diverse army, due to the various languages, cultures, and preferred weapons individual soldiers wielded. He overcame the possibility of unrest among his troops by being personally involved in battles, as was common among Macedonian kings.

In his first battle in Asia, at Granicus, Alexander used only a small part of his forces—perhaps 13,000 infantry, with 5,000 cavalry—against a much larger Persian force of 40,000. Alexander placed the phalanx at the center, and cavalry and archers on the wings, so that his line matched the length of the Persian cavalry line. By contrast, the Persian infantry was stationed behind its cavalry. Alexander's military positioning ensured that his troops would not be outflanked; further, his phalanx, armed with long pikes, had a considerable advantage over the Persians' scimitars and javelins. Macedonian losses were negligible compared to those of the Persians.

At Issus in 333 BCE, his first confrontation with Darius, he used the same deployment, and again the central phalanx pushed through. Alexander personally led the charge in the center and routed the opposing army. At the decisive encounter with Alexander at Gaugamela, Darius equipped his chariots with scythes on the wheels to break up the phalanx and equipped his cavalry with pikes. Alexander in turn arranged a double phalanx, with the center advancing at an angle, which parted when the chariots bore down and reformed once they had passed. The advance proved successful and broke Darius's center, and Darius was forced to retreat once again.

When faced with opponents who used unfamiliar fighting techniques, such as in Central Asia and India, Alexander adapted his forces to his opponents' style. For example, in Bactria and Sogdiana, Alexander successfully used his javelin throwers and archers to prevent outflanking movements, while massing his cavalry at the center. In India, confronted by Porus's elephant corps, the Macedonians opened their ranks to envelop the elephants, and used their sarissas to strike upwards and dislodge the elephants' handlers.

5.7.3: Alexander's Empire

Alexander the Great's legacy was the dissemination of Greek culture throughout Asia.

Learning Objective

- Describe the legacy Alexander left within his conquered territories

Boundless URL: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/catalog/boundlesscourses>



Edited 2018: Tillamook Bay Community College

Key Points

- Alexander's campaigns greatly increased contacts and trade between the East and West, and vast areas to the east were significantly exposed to Greek civilization and influence. Successor states remained dominant for the next 300 years during the Hellenistic period.
- Over the course of his conquests, Alexander founded some 20 cities that bore his name, and these cities became centers of culture and diversity. The most famous of these cities is Egypt's Mediterranean port of Alexandria.
- Hellenization refers to the spread of Greek language, culture, and population into the former Persian Empire after Alexander's conquest.
- Alexander's death was sudden and his empire disintegrated into a 40-year period of war and chaos in 321 BCE. The Hellenistic world eventually settled into four stable power blocks: the Ptolemaic Kingdom of Egypt, the Seleucid Empire in the east, the Kingdom of Pergamon in Asia Minor, and Macedon.

Key Term

- **Hellenization** – The spread of Greek language, culture, and population into the former Persian Empire after Alexander's conquests.

Alexander's legacy extended beyond his military conquests. His campaigns greatly increased contacts and trade between the East and West, and vast areas to the east were exposed to Greek civilization and influence. Some of the cities he founded became major cultural centers, and many survived into the 21st century. His chroniclers recorded valuable information about the areas through which he marched, while the Greeks themselves attained a sense of belonging to a world beyond the Mediterranean.

Hellenistic Kingdoms

Alexander's most immediate legacy was the introduction of Macedonian rule to huge swathes of Asia. Many of the areas he conquered remained in Macedonian hands or under Greek influence for the next 200 to 300 years. The successor states that emerged were, at least initially, dominant forces, and this 300 year period is often referred to as the Hellenistic period.



Figure 101 Name of Alexander the Great in Egyptian hieroglyphs (written from right to left), c. 330 BCE, Egypt; Louvre Museum.

The eastern borders of Alexander's empire began to collapse during his lifetime. However, the power vacuum he left in the northwest of the Indian subcontinent directly gave rise to one of the most powerful Indian dynasties in history. Taking advantage of this, Chandragupta Maurya (referred to in Greek sources as Sandrokottos), of relatively humble origin, took control of the Punjab, and with that

power base proceeded to conquer the Nanda Empire.

Hellenization

The term "Hellenization" was coined to denote the spread of Greek language, culture, and population into the former Persian Empire after Alexander's conquest. Alexander deliberately pursued Hellenization policies in the communities he conquered. While his intentions may have simply been to disseminate Greek culture, it is more likely that his policies were pragmatic in nature and intended to aid in the rule of his enormous empire via cultural homogenization. Alexander's Hellenization policies can also be viewed as a result of his probable megalomania. Later his successors explicitly rejected these policies. Nevertheless, Hellenization occurred throughout the region, accompanied by a distinct and opposite "Orientalization" of the successor states.

The core of Hellenistic culture was essentially Athenian. The close association of men from across Greece in Alexander's army directly led to the emergence of the largely Attic-based koine (or "common") Greek dialect. Koine spread throughout the Hellenistic world, becoming the lingua franca of Hellenistic lands, and eventually the ancestor of Modern Greek. Furthermore, town planning, education, local government, and art during the Hellenistic periods were all based on classical Greek ideals, evolving into distinct new forms commonly grouped as Hellenistic.

The Founding of Cities

Over the course of his conquests, Alexander founded some 20 cities that bore his name,

most of them east of the Tigris River. The first, and greatest, was Alexandria in Egypt, which would become one of the leading Mediterranean cities. The cities' locations reflected trade routes, as well as defensive positions. At first, the cities must have been inhospitable, and little more than defensive garrisons. Following Alexander's death, many Greeks who had settled there tried to return to Greece. However, a century or so after Alexander's death, many of these cities were thriving with elaborate public buildings and substantial populations that included both Greek and local peoples.

Alexander's cities were most likely intended to be administrative headquarters for his empire, primarily settled by Greeks, many of whom would have served in Alexander's military campaigns. The purpose of these administrative centers was to control the newly conquered subject populations. Alexander attempted to create a unified ruling class in conquered territories like Persia, often using marriage ties to intermingle the conquered with conquerors. He also adopted elements of the Persian court culture, adopting his own version of their royal robes, and imitating some court ceremonies. Many Macedonians resented these policies, believing hybridization of Greek and foreign cultures to be irreverent.

Alexander's attempts at unification also extended to his army. He placed Persian soldiers, some of who had been trained in the Macedonian style, within Macedonian ranks, solving chronic manpower problems.

Division of the Empire

Alexander's death was so sudden that when reports of his death reached Greece, they were not immediately believed. Alexander had no obvious or legitimate heir because his son, Alexander IV, was born after Alexander's death. According to Diodorus, an ancient Greek historian, Alexander's companions asked him on his deathbed to whom he bequeathed his kingdom. His laconic reply was, *tôi kratistôi* ("to the strongest"). Another, more plausible, story claims that Alexander passed his signet ring to Perdiccas, a bodyguard and leader of the companion cavalry, thereby nominating him as his official successor.

Perdiccas initially did not claim power, instead suggesting that Alexander's unborn baby would be king, if male. He also offered himself, Craterus, Leonnatus, and Antipater, as

guardians of Alexander's unborn child. However, the infantry rejected this arrangement since they had been excluded from the discussion. Instead, they supported Alexander's half-brother, Philip Arrhidaeus, as Alexander's successor. Eventually the two sides reconciled, and after the birth of Alexander IV, Perdiccas and Philip III were appointed joint kings, albeit in name only.

Dissension and rivalry soon afflicted the Macedonians. After the assassination of Perdiccas in 321 BCE, Macedonian unity collapsed, and 40 years of war between "The Successors" (Diadochi) ensued, before the Hellenistic world settled into four stable power blocks: the Ptolemaic Kingdom of Egypt, the Seleucid Empire in the east, the Kingdom of Pergamon in Asia Minor, and Macedon. In the process, both Alexander IV and Philip III were murdered.

5.7.4: The Legacy of Alexander the Great

Four stable power blocks emerged following the death of Alexander the Great: the Ptolemaic Kingdom of Egypt, the Seleucid Empire, the Attalid Dynasty of the Kingdom of Pergamon, and Macedon.

Learning Objective

- Evaluate Alexander the Great's legacy as carried out by his successors

Key Points

- After the assassination of Perdiccas in 321 BCE, Macedonian unity collapsed, and 40 years of war between "The Successors" (Diadochi) ensued before the Hellenistic world settled into four stable power blocks: the Ptolemaic Kingdom of Egypt, the Seleucid Empire, the Kingdom of Pergamon in Asia Minor, and Macedon.
- The Ptolemaic Kingdom was ruled by the Ptolemaic dynasty, starting with Ptolemy I Soter's accession to the throne following the death of Alexander the Great.
- The dynasty survived until the death of Cleopatra VII in 30 BCE, at which point Egypt was conquered by the Romans.
- Although the Ptolemaic Kingdom observed the Egyptian religion and customs, Greek inhabitants were treated as a privileged minority.
- The Seleucid Empire was a major center of Hellenistic culture where Greek

customs prevailed and the Greek political elite dominated, though mostly in urban areas.

- The Attalid kingdom of Pergamon began as a rump state, but was expanded by subsequent rulers. The Attalids were some of the most loyal supporters of Rome in the Hellenistic world and were known for their generous and intelligent rule.
- The Macedonian regime is the only successor state to Alexander the Great's empire that maintained archaic perceptions of kingship, and elided the adoption of Hellenistic monarchical customs.

Key Terms

- **Satrap** – A governor of a province in the Hellenistic empire. The word is also used metaphorically to refer to leaders who are heavily influenced by larger superpowers or hegemonies, and regionally act as a surrogate for those larger players.
- **Proskynesis** – A traditional Persian act of bowing or prostrating oneself before a person of higher social rank.

Background

Alexander's death was so sudden that when reports of his death reached Greece, they were not immediately believed. Alexander had no obvious or legitimate heir because his son, Alexander IV, was born after Alexander's death. According to Diodorus, an ancient Greek historian, Alexander's companions asked him on his deathbed to whom he bequeathed his kingdom. His laconic reply was *tôi kratistôi* ("to the strongest"). Another, more plausible, story claims that Alexander passed his signet ring to Perdikkas, a bodyguard and leader of the companion cavalry, thereby nominating him as his official successor.

Perdikkas initially did not claim power, instead suggesting that Alexander's unborn baby would be king, if male. He also offered himself, Craterus, Leonnatus, and Antipater, as guardians of Alexander's unborn child. However, the infantry rejected this arrangement since they had been excluded from the discussion. Instead, they supported Alexander's half-brother, Philip Arrhidaeus, as Alexander's successor. Eventually the two sides reconciled, and after the birth of Alexander IV, Perdikkas and Philip III were appointed joint kings, albeit in name only.

Dissension and rivalry soon afflicted the Macedonians. After the assassination of Perdiccas in 321 BCE, Macedonian unity collapsed, and 40 years of war between "The Successors" (Diadochi) ensued before the Hellenistic world settled into four stable power blocks: the Ptolemaic Kingdom of Egypt, the Seleucid Empire in the east, the Kingdom of Pergamon in Asia Minor, and Macedon. In the process, both Alexander IV and Philip III were murdered.

The Ptolemaic Kingdom of Egypt

The Ptolemaic Kingdom was a Hellenistic kingdom based in Egypt, and ruled by the Ptolemaic dynasty, starting with Ptolemy I Soter's accession to the throne following the death of Alexander the Great. The Ptolemaic dynasty survived until the death of Cleopatra VII in 30 BCE, at which point Egypt was conquered by the Romans. Ptolemy was appointed as satrap of Egypt in 323 BCE, by Perdiccas during the succession crisis that erupted following Alexander the Great. From that time, Ptolemy ruled Egypt nominally in



Figure 102 Bust of Ptolemy I Soter, king of Egypt (305-282 BCE) and founder of the Ptolemaic dynasty. The identification is based upon coin effigies.

the name of joint kings Philip III and Alexander IV. As Alexander the Great's empire disintegrated, however, Ptolemy established himself as a ruler in his own right. In 321 BCE, Ptolemy defended Egypt against an invasion by Perdiccas. During the Wars of the Diadochi (322-301 BCE), Ptolemy further consolidated his position within Egypt and the region by taking the title of King.

Early in the Ptolemaic dyansty, Egyptian religion and customs were observed, and magnificent new temples were built in the style of the old pharaohs. During the reign of Ptolemies II and III, thousands of Macedonian veterans were rewarded with farm land grants, and settled in colonies and garrisons throughout the country.

Within a century, Greek influence had spread throughout the country and intermarriage produced a large Greco-Egyptian educated class. Despite this, the Greeks remained a privileged minority in Ptolemaic Egypt. Greek individuals lived under Greek law, received a Greek education, were tried in Greek courts, and were citizens of Greek cities, rather than Egyptian cities.

The Seleucid Empire

The Seleucid Empire was a Hellenistic state ruled by the Seleucid Dynasty, which existed from 312 BCE- 63 BCE. It was founded by Seleucus I Nicator following the dissolution of Alexander the Great's empire. Following Ptolemy's successes in the Wars of the Diadochi, Seleucus, then a senior officer in the Macedonian Royal Army, received Babylonia. From there, he expanded his dominion to include much of Alexander's near eastern territories. At the height of its power, the Seleucid Empire encompassed central Anatolia, Persia, the Levant, Mesopotamia, and what is now Kuwait,



Figure 103 Seleucid Empire at its greatest extent, 281 BCE.

Afghanistan, and parts of Pakistan and Turkmenistan. Seleucus himself traveled as far as India in his campaigns. Seleucid expansion into Anatolia and Greece was halted, however, after decisive defeats at the hands of the Roman army.

The Seleucid Empire was a major center of Hellenistic culture, where Greek customs prevailed and the Greek political elite dominated, though mostly in urban areas. Existing Greek populations within the empire were supplemented with Greek immigrants.

The Kingdom of Pergamon

The ancient Greek city of Pergamon was taken by Lysimachus, King of Thrace, in 301 BCE, a short-lived possession that ended when the kingdom of Thrace collapsed. It became the capital of a new kingdom of Pergamon, which Philetaerus founded in 281 BCE, thus beginning the rule of the Attalid Dynasty. The Attalid kingdom began as a rump state, but was expanded by subsequent rulers. The Attalids themselves were some of the

most loyal supporters of Rome in the Hellenistic world. Under Attalus I (r. 241-197 BCE), the Attalids allied with Rome against Philip V of Macedon, during the first and second



Figure 104 The Kingdom of Pergamon (colored olive), shown at its greatest extent in 188 BCE.

Macedonian Wars. They allied with Rome again under Eumenes II (r. 197-158 BCE) against Perseus of Macedon, during the Third Macedonian War. Additionally, in exchange for their support against the Seleucids, the Attalids were given all former Seleucid domains in Asia Minor.

The Attalids were known for their intelligent and generous rule. Many historical documents from the era demonstrate that the Attalids supported the growth of towns by sending in skilled artisans and remitting taxes. They also allowed Greek cities to maintain nominal independence and sent gifts to Greek cultural sites, such as Delphi, Delos, and Athens, and even remodeled the Acropolis of Pergamon after the Acropolis in Athens. When Attalus III (r. 138-133 BCE) died without an heir, he bequeathed his entire kingdom to Rome to prevent civil war.

Macedon

Macedon, or Macedonia, was the dominant state of Hellenistic Greece. In the partition of Alexander's empire among the Diadochi, Macedon fell to the Antipatrid Dynasty, which was headed by Antipater and his son, Cassander. Following Cassander's death in 297 BCE, Macedon slid into a long period of civil strife. Antigonus II (r. 277-239 BCE) successfully restored order



Figure 105 The Kingdom of Macedon at the death of Philip II (336 BCE).

and prosperity in the region, and established a stable monarchy under the Antigonid Dynasty, though he lost control of many Greek city-states in the process.

Notably, the Macedonian regime is the only successor state to Alexander the Great's empire that maintained archaic perceptions of kingship, and elided the adoption of Hellenistic monarchical customs. The Macedonian king was never deified in the same way that kings of the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Dynasties had been. Additionally, the custom of proskynesis, a traditional Persian act of bowing or prostrating oneself before a person of higher social rank, was never adopted. Instead, Macedonian subjects addressed their kings in a far more casual manner, and kings still consulted with their aristocracy in the process of making decisions.

During the reigns of Philip V (r. 221-179 BCE) and his son Perseus (r. 179-168 BCE), Macedon clashed with the rising Roman republic. During the 2nd and 1st centuries BCE, Macedon fought a series of wars against Rome. Two decisive defeats in 197 and 168 BCE resulted in the deposition of the Antigonid Dynasty, and the dismantling of the kingdom of Macedon.

Attributions

- The Rise of the Macedon
 - "Rise of Macedon." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rise_of_Macedon. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Sarissa." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarissa>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Epaminondas." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epaminondas>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Philip II of Macedon." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philip_II_of_Macedon. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Classical Greece: Rise of Macedon." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classical_Greece#Rise_of_Macedon. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Makedonische_phalanx.png." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Makedonische_phalanx.png. Wikipedia Public domain.

- "Filip_II_Macedonia.jpg."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Filip_II_Macedonia.jpg. Wikipedia Public domain.
- Alexander the Great
 - "Alexander the Great."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_the_great%23Character. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Phalanx." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phalanx>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Alexander the Great." http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Alexander_the_Great. Wiktionary CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Alexander the Great."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_the_great%23mediaviewer/File:AlexanderTheGreat_B Wikipedia CC BY-SA 2.0.
- Alexander's Empire
 - "Alexander the Great." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_the_Great. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Alexander the Great."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_the_Great%23mediaviewer/File:Name_of_Alexander_ Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- The Legacy of Alexander the Great
 - "Satrap." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satrap>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Attalid dynasty." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attalid_dynasty. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Seleucid Empire." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seleucid_Empire. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Macedonia (ancient kingdom)."
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macedonia_\(ancient_kingdom\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macedonia_(ancient_kingdom)). Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Pergamon." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pergamon>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Proskynesis." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proskynesis>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- "Ptolemaic Kingdom." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ptolemaic_Kingdom.
Wikipedia CC BY- SA 3.0.
- "Asia_Minor_188_BCE.jpg."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Asia_Minor_188_BCE.jpg.
Wikimedia Public Domain.
- "Ptolemy_I_Soter_Louvre_Ma849.jpg."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ptolemy_I_Soter_Louvre_Ma849.jpg
. Wikimedia Public domain.
- "Seleucid_Empire_28flat_map29.svg."
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Seleucid_Empire_\(flat_map\).svg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Seleucid_Empire_(flat_map).svg).
Wikimedia CC BY-SA 4.0.
- "Map_Macedonia_336_BC-en.svg."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_Macedonia_336_BC-en.svg.
Wikimedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

6: The Roman World

6.1: The Etruscans

6.1.1: The Origins of Etruria

The Etruscans were a Mediterranean civilization during the 6th to 3rd century BCE, from whom the Romans derived a great deal of cultural influence.

Learning Objective

- Explain the relationship between the Etruscan and Roman civilizations

Key Points

- The prevailing view is that Rome was founded by Italics who later merged with Etruscans. Rome was likely a small settlement until the arrival of the Etruscans, who then established Rome's urban infrastructure.
- The Etruscans were indigenous to the Mediterranean area, probably stemming from the Villanovan culture.
- The mining and commerce of metal, especially copper and iron, led to an enrichment of the Etruscans, and to the expansion of their influence in the Italian Peninsula and the western Mediterranean Sea. Conflicts with the Greeks led the Etruscans to ally themselves with the Carthaginians.
- The Etruscans governed within a state system, with only remnants of the chiefdom or tribal forms. The Etruscan state government was essentially a theocracy.
- Aristocratic families were important within Etruscan society, and women enjoyed, comparatively, many freedoms within society.
- The Etruscan system of belief was an immanent polytheism that incorporated indigenous, Indo- European, and Greek influences.
- It is believed that the Etruscans spoke a non-Indo-European language, probably related to what is called the Tyrsenian language family, which is itself an isolate family, or in other words, unrelated directly to other known language groups.

Key Terms

Boundless URL: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/catalog/boundlesscourses>



Edited 2018: Tillamook Bay Community College

- **Etruscan** – The modern name given to a civilization of ancient Italy in the area corresponding roughly to Tuscany, western Umbria, and northern Latium.
- **Theocracy** – A form of government in which a deity is officially recognized as the civil ruler, and official policy is governed by officials regarded as divinely guided, or is pursuant to the doctrine of a particular religion or religious group.
- **Oligarchic** – A form of power structure in which power effectively rests with a small number of people. These people could be distinguished by royalty, wealth, family ties, education, corporate, or military control. Such states are often controlled by a few prominent families who typically pass their influence from one generation to the next; however, inheritance is not a necessary condition for the application of this term.

Those who subscribe to an Italic (a diverse group of people who inhabited pre-Roman Italy) foundation of Rome, followed by an Etruscan invasion, typically speak of an Etruscan "influence" on Roman culture; that is, cultural objects that were adopted by Rome from neighboring Etruria. The prevailing view is that Rome was founded by Italics who later merged with Etruscans. In that case, Etruscan cultural objects are not a heritage but are, instead, influences. Rome was likely a small settlement until the arrival of the Etruscans, who then established its initial urban infrastructure.

Origins

The origins of the Etruscans are mostly lost in prehistory. Historians have no literature, and no original texts of religion or philosophy. Therefore, much of what is known about this civilization is derived from grave goods and tomb findings. The main hypotheses state that the Etruscans were indigenous to the region, probably stemming from the Villanovan culture or from the Near East. Etruscan expansion was focused both to the north, beyond the Apennines, and into Campania. The mining and commerce of metal, especially copper and iron, led to an enrichment of the Etruscans, and to the expansion of their influence in the Italian Peninsula and the western Mediterranean Sea. Here, their interests collided with those of the Greeks, especially in the 6th century BCE, when Phocceans of Italy founded colonies along the coast of Sardinia, Spain, and Corsica. This led the Etruscans to ally themselves with the Carthaginians, whose interests also collided with the Greeks.



Figure 106 Extent of Etruscan civilization and the 12 Etruscan League cities.

The map shows that Etruria, in 750 BC, covered an area of modern-day Italy from the Tyrrhenian Sea in the west, to Felathri in the north, to Perusia in the east, and to the area just north of Rome in the south. The twelve Etruscan league cities were Felathri, Arretium, Curtun, Perusia, Fufluna, Clevsin, Vetluna, Velzna, Velch, Tarchna, Caisra, and Veii. The map also shows the extent of the Etruscan expansion that occurred between 750-500. During that time, their lands stretched from Corsica in the west, to Mantua in the north, to Spica in the east, and to Campeva in the south.

Around 540 BCE, the Battle of Alalia led to a new distribution of power in the western Mediterranean Sea. Though the battle had no clear winner, Carthage managed to expand its sphere of influence at the expense of the Greeks, and Etruria saw itself relegated to the northern Tyrrhenian Sea with full ownership of Corsica. From the first half of the 5th century BCE, the new international political situation signaled the beginning of Etruscan decline after they had lost their southern provinces. In 480 BCE, Etruria's ally, Carthage, was defeated by a coalition of Magna Graecia cities led by Syracuse. A few years later, in 474 BCE, Syracuse's tyrant, Hiero, defeated the Etruscans at the Battle of Cumae. Etruria's influence over the cities of Latium and Campania weakened, and it was taken over by the Romans and Samnites. In the 4th century, Etruria saw a Gallic invasion end its influence over the Po valley and the Adriatic coast. Meanwhile, Rome had started annexing Etruscan cities. These events led to the loss of the Northern Etruscan provinces. Etruria was conquered by Rome in the 3rd century BCE.

Etruscan Government

The Etruscans governed using a state system of society, with only remnants of the

chiefdom and tribal norms. In this way, they were different from the surrounding Italics. Rome was, in a sense, the first Italic state, but it began as an Etruscan one. It is believed that the Etruscan government style changed from total monarchy to an oligarchic republic (as the Roman Republic did) in the 6th century BCE, although it is important to note this did not happen to all city-states.

The Etruscan state government was essentially a theocracy. The government was viewed as being a central authority over all tribal and clan organizations. It retained the power of life and death; in fact, the gorgon, an ancient symbol of that power, appears as a motif in Etruscan decoration. The adherents to this state power were united by a common religion. Political unity in Etruscan society was the city-state, and Etruscan texts name quite a number of magistrates without explanation of their function (the camthi, the parnich, the purth, the tamera, the macstrev, etc.).

Etruscan Families

According to inscriptional evidence from tombs, aristocratic families were important within Etruscan society. Most likely, aristocratic families rose to prominence over time through the accumulation of wealth via trade, with many of the wealthiest Etruscan cities located near the coast.

The Etruscan name for family was lautn, and at the center of the lautn was the married couple. Etruscans were monogamous, and the lids of large numbers of sarcophagi were decorated with images of smiling couples in the prime of their life, often reclining next to each other or in an embrace. Many tombs also included funerary inscriptions naming the parents of the deceased, indicating the importance of the mother's side of the family in Etruscan society. Additionally, Etruscan women were allowed considerable freedoms in comparison to Greek and Roman women, and mixed-sex socialization outside the domestic realm occurred.

Etruscan Religion

The Etruscan system of belief was an immanent polytheism; that is, all visible phenomena were considered to be a manifestation of divine power, and that power was subdivided into deities that acted continually on the world of man and could be dissuaded or persuaded in favor of human affairs. Three layers of deities are evident in the extensive Etruscan art

motifs. One appears to be divinities of an indigenous nature: Catha and Usil, the sun; Tivr, the moon; Selvans, a civil god; Turan, the goddess of love; Laran, the god of war; Leinth, the goddess of death; Maris; Thalna; Turms; and the ever-popular Fufluns, whose name is related in an unknown way to the city of Populonia and the *populus Romanus*, the Roman people.

Ruling over this pantheon of lesser deities were higher ones that seem to reflect the Indo-European system: Tin or Tinia, the sky; Uni, his wife (Juno); and Cel, the earth goddess. In addition the Greek gods were taken into the Etruscan system: Aritimi (Artemis), Menrva (Minerva), and Pacha (Bacchus). The Greek heroes taken from Homer also appear extensively in art motifs.

The Greek polytheistic approach was similar to the Etruscan religious and cultural base. As the Romans emerged from the legacy created by both of these groups, it shared in a belief system of many gods and deities.

Etruscan Language and Etymology

Knowledge of the Etruscan language is still far from complete. It is believed that the Etruscans spoke a non-Indo-European language, probably related to what is called the Tyrsenian language family, which is itself an isolate family, or in other words, unrelated directly to other known language groups. No etymology exists for Rasna, the Etruscans' name for themselves, though Italian historic linguist, Massimo Pittau, has proposed that it meant "shaved" or "beardless." The hypothesized etymology for Tusci, a root for "Tuscan" or "Etruscan," suggests a connection to the Latin and Greek words for "tower," illustrating the Tusci people as those who built towers. This was possibly based upon the Etruscan preference for building hill towns on high precipices that were enhanced by walls. The word may also be related to the city of Troy, which was also a city of towers, suggesting large numbers of migrants from that region into Etruria.

6.1.2: Etruscan Artifacts

Historians have no literature, or original Etruscan religious or philosophical texts, on which to base knowledge of their civilization. So much of what is known is derived from grave goods and tomb findings.

Learning Objective

- Explain the importance of Etruscan artifacts to our understanding of their history

Key Points

- Princely tombs did not house individuals, but families who were interred over long periods.
- Although many Etruscan cities were later assimilated by Italic, Celtic, or Roman ethnic groups, the Etruscan names and inscriptions that survive within the ruins provide historic evidence as to the range of settlements that the Etruscans constructed.
- It is unclear whether Etruscan cultural objects are influences upon Roman culture or part of native Roman heritage. The criterion for deciding whether or not an object originated in Rome or descended to the Romans from the Etruscans is the date of the object and the opinion of ancient sources regarding the provenance of the object's style.
- Although Diodorus of Sicily wrote, in the 1st century, of the great achievements of the Etruscans, little survives or is known of it.

Key Terms

- **Oligarchic** – A form of power structure in which power effectively rests with a small number of people. These people could be distinguished by royalty, wealth, family ties, education, corporate, or military control. Such states are often controlled by a few prominent families who typically pass their influence from one generation to the next, but inheritance is not a necessary condition for the application of this term.
- **Sarcophagi** – A box-like funeral receptacle for a corpse, most commonly carved in stone and displayed above ground.

Historians have no literature or original Etruscan religious or philosophical texts on which to base knowledge of their civilization, so much of what is known is derived from grave goods and tomb findings. Princely tombs did not house individuals, but families who were interred over long periods. The decorations and objects included at these sites paint a picture of Etruscan social and political life. For instance, wealth from trade seems to have supported the rise of aristocratic families who, in turn, were likely foundational to the

Etruscan oligarchic system of governance. Indeed, at some Etruscan tombs, physical evidence of trade has been found in the form of grave goods, including fine faience ware cups, which was likely the result of trade with Egypt. Additionally, the depiction of married couples on many sarcophagi provide insight into the respect and freedoms granted to women within Etruscan society, as well as the emphasis placed on romantic love as a basis for marriage pairings.



Figure 107 Sarcophagus of an Etruscan couple in the Louvre, Room 18.

Although many Etruscan cities were later assimilated by Italic, Celtic, or Roman ethnic groups, the Etruscan names and inscriptions that survive within the ruins provide historic evidence of the range of settlements constructed by the Etruscans. Etruscan cities flourished over most of Italy during the Roman Iron Age. According to ancient sources, some cities were founded by the Etruscans in prehistoric times, and bore entirely Etruscan names. Others were

later colonized by the Etruscans from Italic groups.

Nonetheless, relatively little is known about the architecture of the ancient Etruscans. What is known is that they adapted the native Italic styles with influence from the external appearance of Greek architecture. Etruscan architecture is not generally considered part of the body of Greco-Roman classical architecture. Though the houses of the wealthy were evidently very large and comfortable, the burial chambers of tombs, and the grave-goods that filled them, survived in greater numbers. In the southern Etruscan area, tombs contain large, rock-cut chambers under a tumulus in large necropoli.

There is some debate among historians as to whether Rome was founded by Italic cultures and then invaded by the Etruscans, or whether Etruscan cultural objects were adopted subsequently by Roman peoples. In other words, it is unclear whether Etruscan cultural objects are influences upon Roman culture, or part of native Roman heritage. Among archaeologists, the main criteria for deciding whether or not an object originated in

Rome, or descended to the Romans from the Etruscans, is the date of the object, which is often determined by process of carbon dating. After this process, the opinion of ancient sources is consulted.

Although Diodorus of Sicily wrote in the 1st century of the great achievements of the Etruscans, little survives or is known of it. Most Etruscan script that does survive are fragments of religious and funeral texts. However, it is evident, from Etruscan visual art, that Greek myths were well known.

6.1.3: Etruscan Religion

The Etruscan belief system was heavily influenced by other religions in the region, and placed heavy emphasis on the divination of the gods' wills to guide human affairs.

Learning Objective

- Describe some of the key characteristics of the Etruscan belief system

Key Points

- The Etruscan system of belief was an immanent polytheism, meaning all visible phenomena were considered to be a manifestation of divine power, and that power was subdivided into deities that acted continually on the world of man.
- The Etruscan scriptures were a corpus of texts termed the *Etrusca Disciplina*, a set of rules for the conduct of all divination.
- Three layers of deities are evident in the extensive Etruscan art motifs: indigenous, Indo-European, and Greek.
- Etruscan beliefs concerning the afterlife were influenced by a number of sources, particularly those of the early Mediterranean region.

Key Terms

- **Polytheism** – The worship of, or belief in, multiple deities, usually assembled into a pantheon of gods and goddesses, each with their own specific religions and rituals.
- **Etrusca Disciplina** – A corpus of texts that comprised the Etruscan scriptures, which essentially provided a systematic guide to divination.

The Etruscan system of belief was an immanent polytheism; that is, all visible phenomena

were considered to be a manifestation of divine power and that power was subdivided into deities that acted continually on the world of humans, and could be dissuaded or persuaded in favor of human affairs. The Greek polytheistic approach was similar to the Etruscan religious and cultural base. As the Romans emerged from the legacy created by both of these groups, it shared in a belief system of many gods and deities.

Etrusca Disciplina

The Etruscan scriptures were a corpus of texts, termed the *Etrusca Disciplina*. These texts were not scriptures in the typical sense, and foretold no prophecies. The Etruscans did not appear to have a systematic rubric for ethics or morals. Instead, they concerned themselves with the problem of understanding the will of the gods, which the Etruscans considered inscrutable. The Etruscans did not attempt to rationalize or explain divine actions or intentions, but to simply divine what the gods' wills were through an elaborate system of divination. Therefore, the *Etrusca Disciplina* is mainly a set of rules for the conduct of all sorts of divination. It does not dictate what laws shall be made or how humans are to behave, but instead elaborates rules for how to ask the gods these questions and receive their answers.

Divinations were conducted by priests, who the Romans called *haruspices* or *sacerdotes*. A special magistrate was designated to look after sacred items, but every man had religious responsibilities. In this way, the Etruscans placed special emphasis upon intimate contact with divinity, consulting with the gods and seeking signs from them before embarking upon a task.



Figure 108 The Mars of Todi, a life-sized Etruscan bronze sculpture of a soldier making a votive offering, most likely to Laran, the Etruscan god of war; late 5th to early 4th century BCE.

Spirits and Deities

Three layers of deities are evident in the extensive Etruscan art motifs. One appears to be divinities of an indigenous nature: Catha and Usil, the sun; Tivr, the moon; Selvans, a civil god; Turan, the goddess of love; Laran, the god of war; Leinth, the goddess of death; Maris; Thalna; Turms; and the ever-popular Fufluns, whose name is related in some unknown way to the city of Populonia and the *populus Romanus* (the Roman people). Ruling over this pantheon of lesser deities were higher ones that seem to reflect the Indo-European system: Tin or Tinia, the sky; Uni, his wife (Juno); and Cel, the earth goddess. In addition, the Greek gods were taken into the Etruscan system: Aritimi (Artemis), Menrva (Minerva), and Pacha (Bacchus). The Greek heroes taken from Homer also appear extensively in art motifs.

The Afterlife

Etruscan beliefs concerning the afterlife seem to be influenced by a number of sources.



Figure 109 19th century reconstruction of an Etruscan temple, in the courtyard of the Villa Giulia Museum in Rome, Italy.

The Etruscans shared in general early Mediterranean beliefs. For instance, much like the Egyptians, the Etruscans believed that survival and prosperity in the afterlife depended on the treatment of the deceased's remains. Souls of ancestors are found depicted around Etruscan tombs, and after the 5th century BCE, the deceased are depicted in iconography as traveling to the underworld. In several instances, spirits of the dead are referred to as *hinthial*, or one who is underneath. The transmigrational world beyond the grave was patterned after the Greek Hades and ruled by Aita. The deceased were guided there by Charun, the equivalent of Death, who was blue and wielded a hammer. The Etruscan version

of Hades was populated by Greek mythological figures, some of which were of composite

appearance to those in Greek mythology.

Etruscan tombs imitated domestic structures, contained wall paintings and even furniture, and were spacious. The deceased was depicted in the tomb at the prime of their life, and often with a spouse. Not everyone had a sarcophagus, however. Some deceased individuals were laid out on stone benches, and depending on the proportion of inhumation, versus cremation, rites followed, cremated ashes and bones might be put into an urn in the shape of a house, or in a representation of the deceased.

Attributions

- The Origins of Etruria
 - "Etruscan Civilization." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etruscan_civilization. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Oligarchy." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oligarchy>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Theocracy." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theocracy>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "theocracy." <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/theocracy>. Wiktionary CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Etruscan society." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etruscan_society. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Etruscan Civilization Map." https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Etruscan_civilization_map.png. Wikimedia GNU FDL 1.2.
- Etruscan Artifacts
 - "Etruria." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etruria>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Sarcophagus." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarcophagus>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Etruscan civilization." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etruscan_civilization. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Paris_-_Louvre_-_Sarcophage.jpg." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Paris_-_Louvre_-_Sarcophage.jpg. Wikipedia GNU FDL 1.2.
- Etruscan Religion
 - "Polytheism." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polytheism>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- "Etruscan mythology." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etruscan_mythology.
Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "0_Mars_de_Todi_-_Museo_Gregoriano_Etrusco_28129.JPG."
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:0_Mars_de_Todi_-_Museo_Gregoriano_Etrusco_\(1\).JPG](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:0_Mars_de_Todi_-_Museo_Gregoriano_Etrusco_(1).JPG). Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Villa_Giulia_ricostruzione_del_tempio_etrusco_03.JPG."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Villa_Giulia_ricostruzione_del_tempio_etrusco_03.JPG. Wikipedia GNU FDL 1.2.

6.2: Early Rome

8.2.1: The Founding of Rome

Myths surrounding the founding of Rome describe the city's origins through the lens of later figures and events.

Learning Objective

- Explain how the founding of Rome is rooted in mythology

Key Points

- The national epic poem of mythical Rome, the *Aeneid* by Virgil, tells the story of how the Trojan prince, Aeneas, came to Italy. The *Aeneid* was written under the emperor Augustus, who, through Julius Caesar, claimed ancestry from Aeneas.
- The Alba Longan line, begun by Iulus, Aeneas's son, extends to King Procas, who fathered two sons, Numitor and Amulius. According to the myth of Romulus and Remus, Amulius captured Numitor, sent him to prison, and forced the daughter of Numitor, Rhea Silvia, to become a virgin priestess among the Vestals.
- Despite Amulius' best efforts, Rhea Silvia had twin boys, Romulus and Remus, by Mars. Romulus and Remus eventually overthrew Amulius, and restored Numitor.
- In the course of a dispute during the founding of the city of Rome, Romulus killed Remus. Thus Rome began with a fratricide, a story that was later taken to represent the city's history of internecine political strife and bloodshed.
- According to the archaeological record of the region, the development of Rome itself is presumed to have coalesced around the migrations of various Italic tribes, who originally inhabited the Alban Hills as they moved into the agriculturally-superior valley near the Tiber River.
- The discovery of a series of fortification walls on the north slope of Palatine Hill, most likely dating to the middle of the 8th century BCE, provide the strongest evidence of the original site and date of the founding of the city of Rome.

Key Terms

- **Romulus** – The founder of Rome, and one of two twin sons of Rhea Silvia and Mars.
- **Aeneas** – A Trojan survivor of the Trojan War who, according to legend, journeyed

to Italy and founded the bloodline that would eventually lead to the Julio-Claudian emperors.

- **Rome** – An Italic civilization that began on the Italian Peninsula as early as the 8th century BCE. Located along the Mediterranean Sea, and centered on one city, it expanded to become one of the largest empires in the ancient world.

The founding of Rome can be investigated through archaeology, but traditional stories, handed down by the ancient Romans themselves, explain the earliest history of their city in terms of legend and myth. The most familiar of these myths, and perhaps the most famous of all Roman myths, is the story of Romulus and Remus, the twins who were suckled by a she-wolf. This story had to be reconciled with a dual tradition, set earlier in time.

Romulus and the Founding of Rome

Romulus and Remus were purported to be sons of Rhea Silvia and Mars, the god of war. Because of a prophecy that they would overthrow their great-uncle Amulius, who had overthrown Silvia's father, Numitor, they were, in the manner of many mythological heroes, abandoned at birth. Both sons were left to die on the Tiber River, but were saved by a number of miraculous interventions. After being carried to safety by the river itself, the twins were nurtured by a she-wolf and fed by a woodpecker, until a shepherd, named Faustulus, found them and took them as his sons.



Figure 110 The Capitoline Wolf - The iconic sculpture of Romulus and Remus being suckled by the she-wolf who raised them. Traditional scholarship says the wolf-figure is Etruscan, 5th century BCE, with figures of Romulus and Remus added in the 15th century CE by Antonio Pollaiuolo. Recent studies suggest that the wolf may be a medieval sculpture dating from the 13th century CE..

When Remus and Romulus became adults and learned the truth about their birth and upbringing, they killed Amulius and restored Numitor to the throne. Rather than wait to inherit Alba Longa, the city of their birth, the twins decided to establish their own city. They quarreled, however, over where to locate the new city, and in the process of their dispute, Romulus killed his brother. Thus Rome began with a fratricide, a story that was later taken

to represent the city's history of internecine political strife and bloodshed.

Aeneas and the Aeneid

The national epic of mythical Rome, the *Aeneid* by Virgil, tells the story of how the Trojan prince, Aeneas, came to Italy. Although the *Aeneid* was written under the emperor Augustus between 29 and 19 BCE, it tells the story of the founding of Rome centuries before Augustus's time. The hero, Aeneas, was already well known within Greco-Roman legend and myth, having been a character in the *Iliad*. But Virgil took the disconnected tales of Aeneas's wanderings, and his vague association with the foundation of Rome, and fashioned it into a compelling foundation myth or national epic. The story tied Rome to the legends of Troy, explained the Punic Wars, glorified traditional Roman virtues, and legitimized the Julio- Claudian dynasty as descendants of the founders, heroes, and gods of Rome and Troy.

Virgil makes use of symbolism to draw comparisons between the emperor Augustus and Aeneas, painting them both as founders of Rome. The *Aeneid* also contains prophecies about Rome's future, the deeds of Augustus, his ancestors, and other famous Romans. The shield of Aeneas even depicts Augustus's victory at Actium in 31 BCE. Virgil wrote the *Aeneid* during a time of major political and social change in Rome, with the fall of the republic and the Final War of the Roman Republic tearing through society and causing many to question Rome's inherent greatness. In this context, Augustus instituted a new era of prosperity and peace through the reintroduction of traditional Roman moral values. The *Aeneid* was seen as reflecting this aim by depicting Aeneas as a man devoted and loyal to his country and its greatness, rather than being concerned with his own personal gains. The *Aeneid* also gives mythic legitimization to the rule of Julius Caesar, and by extension, to his adopted son, Augustus, by immortalizing the tradition that renamed Aeneas's son Iulus, making him an ancestor to the family of Julius Caesar.

According to the *Aeneid*, the survivors from the fallen city of Troy banded together under Aeneas, underwent a series of adventures around the Mediterranean Sea, including a stop at newly founded Carthage under the rule of Queen Dido, and eventually reached the Italian coast. The Trojans were thought to have landed in an area between modern Anzio and Fiumicino, southwest of Rome, probably at Laurentum, or in other versions, at

Lavinium, a place named for Lavinia, the daughter of King Latinus, who Aeneas married. Aeneas' arrival started a series of armed conflicts with Turnus over the marriage of Lavinia. Before the arrival of Aeneas, Turnus was engaged to Lavinia, who then married Aeneas, which began the conflict. Aeneas eventually won the war and killed Turnus, which granted the Trojans the right to stay and to assimilate with the local peoples. The young son of Aeneas, Ascanius, also known as Iulus, went on to found Alba Longa and the line of Alban kings who filled the chronological gap between the Trojan saga and the traditional founding of Rome in the 8th century BCE.

Toward the end of this line, King Procas appears as the father of Numitor and Amulius. At Procas' death, Numitor became king of Alba Longa, but Amulius captured him and sent him to prison. He also forced the daughter of Numitor, Rhea Silvia, to become a virgin priestess among the Vestals. For many years, Amulius was the king. The tortuous nature of the chronology is indicated by Rhea Silvia's ordination among the Vestals, whose order was traditionally said to have been founded by the successor of Romulus, Numa Pompilius.

The Archaeological Record

According to the archaeological record of the region, the Italic tribes who originally inhabited the Alban Hills moved down into the valleys, which provided better land for agriculture. The area around the Tiber River was particularly advantageous and offered many strategic resources. For instance, the river itself provided a natural border on one side of the settlement, and the hills on the other side provided another defensive position for the townspeople. A settlement in this area would have also allowed for control of the river, including commercial and military traffic, as well as a natural observation point at Isola Tiberina. This was especially important, since Rome was at the intersection of the principal roads to the sea from Sabinum and Etruria, and traffic from those roads could not be as easily controlled.

The development of Rome itself is presumed to have coalesced around the migrations of these various tribes into the valley, as evidenced by differences in pottery and burial techniques. The discovery of a series of fortification walls on the north slope of Palatine Hill, most likely dating to the middle of the 8th century BCE, provide the strongest evidence

for the original site and date of the founding of the city of Rome.

6.2.2: The Seven Kings

For its first 200 years, Rome was ruled by seven kings, each of whom is credited either with establishing a key Roman tradition or constructing an important building.

Learning Objective

- Explain the significance of the Seven Kings of Rome to Roman culture

Key Points

- Romulus was Rome's first king and the city's founder. He is best known for the Rape of the Sabine Women and the establishment of the Senate, as well as various voting practices.
- Numa Pompilius was a just, pious king who established the cult of the Vestal Virgins at Rome, and the position of Pontifex Maximus. His reign was characterized by peace.
- Tullus Hostilius had little regard for the Roman gods, and focused entirely on military expansion. He constructed the home of the Roman Senate, the *Curia Hostilia*.
- Ancus Marcius ruled peacefully and only fought wars when Roman territories needed defending.
- Lucius Tarquinius Priscus increased the size of the Senate and began major construction works, including the Temple to Jupiter Optimus Maximus, and the Circus Maximus.
- Servius Tullius built the first *pomerium*—walls that fully encircled the Seven Hills of Rome. He also made organizational changes to the Roman army, and implemented a new constitution for the Romans, further developing the citizen classes.
- Lucius Tarquinius Superbus's reign is remembered for his use of violence and intimidation, as well as his disrespect of Roman custom and the Roman Senate. He was eventually overthrown, thus leading to the establishment of the Roman Republic.

Key Terms

Boundless URL: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/catalog/boundlesscourses>



Edited 2018: Tillamook Bay Community College

- **Absolute monarchy** – A monarchical form of government in which the monarch has absolute power among his or her people. This amounts to unrestricted political power over a sovereign state and its people.
- **Patrician** – A group of elite families in ancient Rome.

The first 200 years of Roman history occurred under a monarchy. Rome was ruled by seven kings over this period of time, and each of their reigns were characterized by the personality of the ruler in question. Each of these kings is credited either with establishing a key Roman tradition, or constructing an important building. None of the seven kings were known to be dynasts, and no reference is made to the hereditary nature of kingdom until after the fifth king, Tarquinius Priscus.

The king of Rome possessed absolute power over the people, and the Senate provided only a weak, oligarchic counterbalance to his power, primarily exercising only minor administrative powers. For these reasons, the kingdom of Rome is considered an absolute monarchy. Despite this, Roman kings, with the exception of Romulus, were elected by citizens of Rome who occupied the Curiate Assembly. There, members would vote on candidates that had been nominated by a chosen member of the Senate, called an interrex. Candidates could be chosen from any source.

Romulus

Romulus was Rome's legendary first king and the city's founder. In 753 BCE, Romulus began building the city upon the Palatine Hill. After founding and naming Rome, as the story goes, he permitted men of all classes to come to Rome as citizens, including slaves and freemen, without distinction. To provide his citizens with wives, Romulus invited the neighboring tribes to a festival in Rome where he abducted the young women amongst them (this is known as The Rape of the Sabine Women). After the ensuing war with the Sabines, Romulus shared the kingship with the Sabine king, Titus Tatius. Romulus selected 100 of the noblest men to form the Roman Senate as an advisory council to the king. These men were called *patres* (from *pater*: father, head), and their descendants became the patricians. He also established voting, and class structures that would define sociopolitical proceedings throughout the Roman Republic and Empire.

Numa Pompilius

After the death of Romulus, there was an interregnum for one year, during which ten men chosen from the senate governed Rome as successive *interreges*. Numa Pompilius, a Sabine, was eventually chosen by the senate to succeed Romulus because of his reputation for justice and piety. Numa's reign was marked by peace and religious reform. Numa constructed a new temple to Janus and, after establishing peace with Rome's neighbors, shut the doors of the temple to indicate a state of peace. The doors of the temple remained closed for the balance of his reign. He established the cult of the Vestal Virgins at Rome, as well as the "leaping priests," known as the Salii, and three flamines, or priests, assigned to Jupiter, Mars, and Quirinus. He also established the office and duties of Pontifex Maximus, the head priest of the Roman state religion.

Tullus Hostilius

Tullus Hostilius was much like Romulus in his warlike behavior, and completely unlike Numa in his lack of respect for the gods. Tullus waged war against Alba Longa, Fidenae and Veii, and the Sabines. It was during Tullus' reign that the city of Alba Longa was completely destroyed, after which Tullus integrated its population into Rome. According to the Roman historian Livy, Tullus neglected the worship of the gods until, towards the end of his reign, he fell ill and became superstitious. However, when Tullus called upon Jupiter and begged assistance, Jupiter responded with a bolt of lightning that burned the king and his house to ashes. Tullus is attributed with constructing a new home for the Senate, the *Curia Hostilia*, which survived for 562 years after his death.

Ancus Marcius

Following the death of Tullus, the Romans elected a peaceful and religious king in his place—Numa's grandson, Ancus Marcius. Much like his grandfather, Ancus did little to expand the borders of Rome, and only fought war when his territories needed defending.

Lucius Tarquinius Priscus

Lucius Tarquinius Priscus was the fifth king of Rome and the first of Etruscan birth. After immigrating to Rome, he gained favor with Ancus, who later adopted him as his son. Upon ascending the throne, he waged wars against the Sabines and Etruscans, doubling the size of Rome and bringing great treasures to the city. One of his first reforms was to add 100 new members to the Senate from the conquered Etruscan tribes, bringing the total

number of senators to 200. He used the treasures Rome had acquired from conquests to build great monuments for Rome, including the Roman Forum, the temple to Jupiter on the Capitoline Hill, and the Circus Maximus.

His reign is best remembered for the introduction of Etruscan symbols of military distinction and civilian authority into the Roman tradition, including the scepter of the king, the rings worn by senators, and the use of the tuba for military purposes.



Figure 111 The Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus.

Servius Tullus

Following Priscus's death, his son-in-law,

Servius Tullius, succeeded him to the throne. Like his father-in-law before him, Servius fought successful wars against the Etruscans. He used the treasure from his campaigns to build the first *pomerium*—walls that fully encircled the Seven Hills of Rome. He also made organizational changes to the Roman army, and was renowned for implementing a new constitution for the Romans and further developing the citizen classes. Servius's reforms brought about a major change in Roman life—voting rights were now based on socioeconomic status, transferring much of the power into the hands of the Roman elite. The 44-year reign of Servius came to an abrupt end when he was assassinated in a conspiracy led by his own daughter, Tullia, and her husband, Lucius Tarquinius Superbus.

Lucius Tarquinius Superbus

While in power, Tarquinius conducted a number of wars against Rome's neighbors, including the Volsci, Gabii, and the Rutuli. Tarquinius also engaged in a series of public works, notably the completion of the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline Hill. Tarquin's reign, however, is best remembered for his use of violence and intimidation in his attempts to maintain control over Rome, as well as his disrespect of Roman custom and the Roman Senate. Tensions came to a head when the king's son, Sextus Tarquinius, raped Lucretia, wife and daughter to powerful Roman nobles. Lucretia then told her relatives about the attack and subsequently committed suicide to avoid the dishonor of the episode. Four men, led by Lucius Junius Brutus, incited a revolution, and as a result, Tarquinius and his family were deposed and expelled from Rome in 509 BCE. Because of

his actions and the way they were viewed by the people, the word for King, *rex*, held a negative connotation in Roman culture until the fall of the Roman Empire. Brutus and Collatinus became Rome's first consuls, marking the beginning of the Roman Republic. This new government would survive for the next 500 years, until the rise of Julius Caesar and Caesar Augustus, and cover a period in which Rome's authority and area of control extended to cover great areas of Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East.

6.2.3: Early Roman Society

Multiple, overlapping hierarchies characterized Roman society, which was also highly patriarchal.

Learning Objective

- Describe what Roman society was like in its early years

Key Points

- Roman society was extremely patriarchal and hierarchical. The adult male head of a household had special legal powers and privileges that gave him jurisdiction over all the members of his family.
- The status of freeborn Romans was established by their ancestry, census ranking, and citizenship.
- The most important division within Roman society was between patricians, a small elite who monopolized political power, and plebeians, who comprised the majority of Roman society.
- The Roman census divided citizens into six complex classes based on property holdings.
- Most adult, free-born men within the city limits of Rome held Roman citizenship. Classes of non-citizens existed and held different legal rights.

Key Terms

- **Tax farming** – A technique of financial management in which future, uncertain revenue streams are fixed into periodic rents via assignment by legal contract to a third party.
- **Plebeians** – A general body of free Roman citizens who were part of the lower

strata of society.

- **Patricians** – A group of ruling class families in ancient Rome.

Roman society was extremely patriarchal and hierarchical. The adult male head of a household had special legal powers and privileges that gave him jurisdiction over all the members of his family, including his wife, adult sons, adult married daughters, and slaves, but there were multiple, overlapping hierarchies at play within society at large. An individual's relative position in one hierarchy might have been higher or lower than it was in another. The status of freeborn Romans was established by the following:

- Their ancestry
- Their census rank, which in turn was determined by the individual's wealth and political privilege
- Citizenship, of which there were grades with varying rights and privileges

Ancestry

The most important division within Roman society was between patricians, a small elite who monopolized political power, and plebeians, who comprised the majority of Roman society. These designations were established at birth, with patricians tracing their ancestry back to the first Senate established under Romulus. Adult, male non-citizens fell outside the realms of these divisions, but women and children, who were also not considered formal citizens, took the social status of their father or husband. Originally, all public offices were only open to patricians and the classes could not intermarry, but, over time, the differentiation between patrician and plebeian statuses became less pronounced, particularly after the establishment of the Roman republic.

Census Rankings

The Roman census divided citizens into six complex classes based on property holdings. The richest class was called the senatorial class, with wealth based on ownership of large agricultural estates, since members of the highest social classes did not traditionally engage in commercial activity. Below the senatorial class was the equestrian order, comprised of members who held the same volume of wealth as the senatorial classes, but who engaged in commerce, making them an influential early business class. Certain

political and quasi-political positions were filled by members of the equestrian order, including tax farming and leadership of the Praetorian Guard. Three additional property-owning classes occupied the rungs beneath the equestrian order. Finally, the *proletarii* occupied the bottom rung with the lowest property values in the kingdom.

Citizenship

Citizenship in ancient Rome afforded political and legal privileges to free individuals with respect to laws, property, and governance. Most adult, free-born men within the city limits of Rome held Roman citizenship. Men who lived in towns outside of Rome might also hold citizenship, but some lacked the right to vote. Free-born, foreign subjects during this period were known as *peregrini*, and special laws existed to govern their conduct and disputes, though they were not considered Roman citizens during the Roman kingdom period. Free-born women in ancient Rome were considered citizens, but they could not vote or hold political office. The status of woman's citizenship affected the citizenship of her offspring. For example, in a type of Roman marriage called *conubium*, both spouses must be



Figure 112 The toga, shown here on a statue restored with the head of Nerva, was the distinctive garb of Roman citizens.

citizens in order to marry. Additionally, the phrase *ex duobus civibus Romanis natos*, translated to mean "children born of two Roman citizens," reinforces the importance of both parents' legal status in determining that of their offspring.

Classes of non-citizens existed and held different legal rights. Under Roman law, slaves were considered property and held no rights. However, certain laws did regulate the institution of slavery, and extended protections to slaves that were not granted to other forms of property. Slaves who had been manumitted became freedmen and enjoyed largely the same rights and protections as free-born citizens. Many slaves descended from debtors or prisoners of war, especially women and children who were captured during foreign military campaigns and sieges.

Ironically, many slaves originated from Rome's conquest of

Greece, and yet Greek culture was considered, in some respects by the Romans, to be superior to their own. In this way, it seems Romans regarded slavery as a circumstance of birth, misfortune, or war, rather than being limited to, or defined by, ethnicity or race. Because it was defined mainly in terms of a lack of legal rights and status, it was also not considered a permanent or inescapable position. Some who had received educations or learned skills that allowed them to earn their own living were manumitted upon the death of their owner, or allowed to earn money to buy their freedom during their owner's lifetime. Some slave owners also freed slaves who they believed to be their natural children. Nonetheless, many worked under harsh conditions, and/or suffered inhumanely under their owners during their enslavement.

Most freed slaves joined the lower plebeian classes, and worked as farmers or tradesmen, though as time progressed and their numbers increased, many were also accepted into the equestrian class. Some went on to populate the civil service, whereas others engaged in commerce, amassing vast fortunes that were rivaled only by those in the wealthiest classes.

Attributions

- The Founding of Rome
 - "Romulus and Remus." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romulus_and_Remus. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "The Founding of Rome." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Founding_of_Rome%23Aeneas. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Aeneid." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aeneid>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Rome." <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Rome>. Wiktionary CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Lupa Capitolina." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romulus_and_Remus%23mediaviewer/File:0_Lupa_Capitolina_ (Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- The Seven Kings
 - "Absolute monarchy." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Absolute_monarchy. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Seven Kings of Rome." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_Kings_of_Rome.

Wikipedia CC BY-SA.

- "King of Rome." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King_of_Rome. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Patrician (ancient Rome)."
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patrician_\(ancient_Rome\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patrician_(ancient_Rome)). Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
- "patrician." <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/patrician>. Wiktionary CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "City of Rome during time of republic."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:City_of_Rome_during_time_of_republic.jpg. Wikimedia Public domain.
- Early Roman Society
 - "Patrician (ancient Rome)."
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patrician_\(ancient_Rome\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patrician_(ancient_Rome)). Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Social class in ancient Rome."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_class_in_ancient_Rome. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Plebs." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plebs>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Farm (revenue leasing)."
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Farm_\(revenue_leasing\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Farm_(revenue_leasing)). Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Roman citizenship." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_citizenship.
Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "220px-Togato,_I_sec_dc._con_testa_di_restauero_da_un_ritratto_di_nerva,_inv._2286.JPG."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Togato,_I_sec_dc._con_testa_di_restauero_da_un_ritratto_di_nerva,_inv._2286.JPG
Wikimedia GNU FDL 1.2.

6.3: The Roman Republic

6.3.1: The Establishment of the Roman Republic

After the public outcry that arose as a result of the rape of Lucretia, Romans overthrew the unpopular king, Lucius Tarquinius Superbus, and established a republican form of government.

Learning Objective

- Explain why and how Rome transitioned from a monarchy to a republic

Key Points

- The Roman monarchy was overthrown around 509 BCE, during a political revolution that resulted in the expulsion of Lucius Tarquinius Superbus, the last king of Rome.
- Despite waging a number of successful campaigns against Rome's neighbors, securing Rome's position as head of the Latin cities, and engaging in a series of public works, Tarquinius was a very unpopular king, due to his violence and abuses of power.
- When word spread that Tarquinius's son raped Lucretia, the wife of the governor of Collatia, an uprising occurred in which a number of prominent patricians argued for a change in government.
- A general election was held during a legal assembly, and participants voted in favor of the establishment of a Roman republic.
- Subsequently, all Tarquins were exiled from Rome and an interrex and two consuls were established to lead the new republic.

Key Terms

- **Interrex** – Literally, this translates to mean a ruler that presides over the period between the rule of two separate kings; or, in other words, a short-term regent.
- **Plebeians** – A general body of free Roman citizens who were part of the lower strata of society.
- **Patricians** – A group of ruling class families in ancient Rome.

The Roman monarchy was overthrown around 509 BCE, during a political revolution that resulted in the expulsion of Lucius Tarquinius Superbus, the last king of Rome. Subsequently, the Roman Republic was established.

Background

Tarquinius was the son of Lucius Tarquinius Priscus, the fifth king of Rome's Seven Kings period. Tarquinius was married to Tullia Minor, the daughter of Servius Tullius, the sixth king of Rome's Seven Kings period. Around 535 BCE, Tarquinius and his wife, Tullia Minor, arranged for the murder of his father-in-law. Tarquinius became king following Servius Tullius's death.

Tarquinius waged a number of successful campaigns against Rome's neighbors, including the Volsci, Gabii, and the Rutuli. He also secured Rome's position as head of the Latin cities, and engaged in a series of public works, such as the completion of the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus. However, Tarquinius remained an unpopular king for a number of reasons. He refused to bury his predecessor and executed a number of leading senators whom he suspected remained loyal to Servius. Following these actions, he refused to replace the senators he executed and refused to consult the Senate in matters of government going forward, thus diminishing the size and influence of the Senate greatly. He also went on to judge capital criminal cases without the advice of his counselors, stoking fear among his political opponents that they would be unfairly targeted.

The Rape of Lucretia and An Uprising

During Tarquinius's war with the Rutuli, his son, Sextus Tarquinius, was sent on a military errand to Collatia, where he was received with great hospitality at the governor's mansion. The governor's wife, Lucretia, hosted Sextus while the governor was away at war. During the night, Sextus entered her bedroom and raped her. The next day, Lucretia traveled to her father, Spurius Lucretius, a distinguished prefect in Rome, and, before witnesses, informed him of what had happened. Because her father was a chief magistrate of Rome, her pleas for justice and vengeance could not be ignored. At the end of her pleas, she stabbed herself in the heart with a dagger, ultimately dying in her own father's arms. The scene struck those who had witnessed it with such horror that they collectively vowed to publicly defend their liberty against the outrages of such tyrants.

Lucius Junius Brutus, a leading citizen and the grandson of Rome's fifth king, Tarquinius Priscus, publicly opened a debate on the form of government that Rome should have in place of the existing monarchy. A number of patricians attended the debate, in which Brutus proposed the banishment of the Tarquins from all territories of Rome, and the appointment of an interrex to nominate new magistrates and to oversee an election of ratification. It was decided that a republican form of government should temporarily replace the monarchy, with two consuls replacing the king and executing the will of a patrician senate. Spurius Lucretius was elected interrex, and he proposed Brutus, and Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus, a leading citizen who was also related to Tarquinius Priscus, as the first two consuls. His choice was ratified by the *comitia curiata*, an organization of patrician families who primarily ratified decrees of the king.



Figure 113 Titian's *Tarquin and Lucretia* (1571).

In order to rally the plebeians to their cause, all were summoned to a legal assembly in the forum, and Lucretia's body was paraded through the streets. Brutus gave a speech and a general election was held. The results were in favor of a republic. Brutus left Lucretius in command of the city as interrex, and pursued the king in Ardea where he had been positioned with his army on campaign. Tarquinius, however, who had heard of developments in Rome, fled the camp before Brutus arrived, and the army received Brutus favorably, expelling the king's sons from their encampment. Tarquinius was subsequently refused entry into Rome and lived as an exile with his family.

The Establishment of the Republic

Although there is no scholarly agreement as to whether or not it actually took place,

Plutarch and Appian both claim that Brutus's first act as consul was to initiate an oath for



Figure 114 Brutus and Lucretia

the people, swearing never again to allow a king to rule Rome. What is known for certain is that he replenished the Senate to its original number of 300 senators, recruiting men from among the equestrian class. The new consuls also created a separate office, called the *rex sacrorum*, to carry out and oversee religious duties, a task that had previously fallen to the king.

The two consuls continued to be elected annually by Roman citizens and advised by the senate. Both consuls were elected for one-year terms and could veto each other's actions. Initially, they were endowed with all the powers of kings past, though over time these were broken down further by the addition of magistrates to the governmental system. The first magistrate added was the praetor, an office that assumed judicial authority from the

consuls. After the praetor, the censor was established, who assumed the power to conduct the Roman census.

6.3.2: Structure of the Republic

The Roman Republic was composed of the Senate, a number of legislative assemblies, and elected magistrates.

Learning Objective

- Describe the political structure of the Roman Republic

Key Points

- The Constitution of the Roman Republic was a set of guidelines and principles passed down, mainly through precedent. The constitution was largely unwritten and uncoded, and evolved over time.
- Roman citizenship was a vital prerequisite to possessing many important legal rights. The Senate passed decrees that were called *senatus consulta*, ostensibly "advice" from the senate to a magistrate. The focus of the Roman Senate was usually foreign policy.
- There were two types of legislative assemblies. The first was the *comitia* ("committees"), which were assemblies of all Roman citizens. The second was the *concilia* ("councils"), which were assemblies of specific groups of citizens.
- The *comitia centuriata* was the assembly of the centuries (soldiers), and they elected magistrates who had imperium powers (consuls and praetors). The *comitia tributa*, or assembly of the tribes (the citizens of Rome), was presided over by a consul and composed of 35 tribes. They elected quaestors, curule aediles, and military tribunes.
- Dictators were sometimes elected during times of military emergency, during which the constitutional government would be disbanded.

Key Terms

- **Patricians** – A group of ruling class families in ancient Rome.
- **Plebeian** – A general body of free Roman citizens who were part of the lower strata of society.
- **Roman Senate** – A political institution in the ancient Roman Republic. It was not an elected body, but one whose members were appointed by the consuls, and later by the censors.

The Constitution of the Roman Republic was a set of guidelines and principles passed down, mainly through precedent. The constitution was largely unwritten and uncoded, and evolved over time. Rather than creating a government that was primarily a democracy (as was ancient Athens), an aristocracy (as was ancient Sparta), or a monarchy (as was Rome before, and in many respects after, the Republic), the Roman constitution mixed

these three elements of governance into their overall political system. The democratic element took the form of legislative assemblies; the aristocratic element took the form of the Senate; and the monarchical element took the form of the many term-limited consuls.



Figure 115 The Roman SPQR Banner - "SPQR" (*senatus populusque romanus*) was the Roman motto, which stood for "the Senate and people of Rome".

The Roman Senate

The Senate's ultimate authority derived from the esteem and prestige of the senators, and was based on both precedent and custom. The Senate passed decrees, which were called *senatus consulta*, ostensibly "advice" handed down from the senate to a magistrate. In practice, the magistrates usually followed the *senatus consulta*. The focus of the Roman Senate was usually foreign policy. However, the power of the Senate expanded over time as the power of the

legislative assemblies declined, and eventually the Senate took a greater role in civil law-making. Senators were usually appointed by Roman censors, but during times of military emergency, such as the civil wars of the 1st century BCE, this practice became less prevalent, and the Roman dictator, triumvir, or the Senate itself would select its members.

Legislative Assemblies

Roman citizenship was a vital prerequisite to possessing many important legal rights, such as the rights to trial and appeal, marriage, suffrage, to hold office, to enter binding contracts, and to enjoy special tax exemptions. An adult male citizen with full legal and political rights was called *optimo jure*. The *optimo jure* elected assemblies, and the assemblies elected magistrates, enacted legislation, presided over trials in capital cases, declared war and peace, and forged or dissolved treaties. There



Figure 116 Curia Julia - The Roman Senate House

were two types of legislative assemblies. The first was the *comitia* ("committees"), which were assemblies of all *optimo jure*. The second was the *concilia* ("councils"), which were assemblies of specific groups of *optimo jure*.

Citizens on these assemblies were organized further on the basis of *curiae* (familial groupings), centuries (for military purposes), and tribes (for civil purposes), and each would each gather into their own assemblies. The Curiate Assembly served only a symbolic purpose in the late Republic, though the assembly was used to ratify the powers of newly elected magistrates by passing laws known as *leges curiatae*. The *comitia centuriata* was the assembly of the centuries (soldiers). The president of the *comitia centuriata* was usually a consul, and the *comitia centuriata* would elect magistrates who had imperium powers (consuls and praetors). It also elected censors. Only the *comitia centuriata* could declare war and ratify the results of a census. It also served as the highest court of appeal in certain judicial cases.

The assembly of the tribes, the *comitia tributa*, was presided over by a consul, and was composed of 35 tribes. The tribes were not ethnic or kinship groups, but rather geographical subdivisions. While it did not pass many laws, the *comitia tributa* did elect quaestors, curule aediles, and military tribunes. The Plebeian Council was identical to the assembly of the tribes, but excluded the patricians. They elected their own officers, plebeian tribunes, and plebeian aediles. Usually a plebeian tribune would preside over the assembly. This assembly passed most laws, and could also act as a court of appeal.

Since the tribunes were considered to be the embodiment of the plebeians, they were sacrosanct. Their sacrosanctness was enforced by a pledge, taken by the plebeians, to kill any person who harmed or interfered with a tribune during his term of office. As such, it was considered a capital offense to harm a tribune, to disregard his veto, or to interfere with his actions. In times of military emergency, a dictator would be appointed for a term of six months. The constitutional government would be dissolved, and the dictator would be the absolute master of the state. When the dictator's term ended, constitutional government would be restored.

Executive Magistrates

Magistrates were the elected officials of the Roman republic. Each magistrate was vested

with a degree of power, and the dictator, when there was one, had the highest level of power. Below the dictator was the censor (when they existed), and the consuls, the highest ranking ordinary magistrates. Two were elected every year and wielded supreme power in both civil and military powers. The ranking among both consuls flipped every month, with one outranking the other.

Below the consuls were the praetors, who administered civil law, presided over the courts, and commanded provincial armies. Censors conducted the Roman census, during which time they could appoint people to the Senate. Curule aediles were officers elected to conduct domestic affairs in Rome, who were vested with powers over the markets, public games, and shows. Finally, at the bottom of magistrate rankings were the quaestors, who usually assisted the consuls in Rome and the governors in the provinces with financial tasks. Plebeian tribunes and plebeian aediles were considered representatives of the people, and acted as a popular check over the Senate through use of their veto powers, thus safeguarding the civil liberties of all Roman citizens.

Each magistrate could only veto an action that was taken by an equal or lower ranked magistrate. The most significant constitutional power a magistrate could hold was that of imperium or command, which was held only by consuls and praetors. This gave the magistrate in question the constitutional authority to issue commands, military or otherwise.

Election to a magisterial office resulted in automatic membership in the Senate for life, unless impeached. Once a magistrate's annual term in office expired, he had to wait at least ten years before serving in that office again. Occasionally, however, a magistrate would have his command powers extended through prorogation, which effectively allowed him to retain the powers of his office as a promagistrate.

6.3.3: Roman Society Under the Republic

The bulk of Roman politics prior to the 1st century BCE focused on inequalities among the orders.

Learning Objective

- Describe the relationship between the government and the people in the time of the

Boundless URL: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/catalog/boundlesscourses>

287



Edited 2018: Tillamook Bay Community College

Key Points

- A number of developments affected the relationship between Rome's republican government and society, particularly in regard to how that relationship differed among patricians and plebeians.
- In 494 BCE, plebeian soldiers refused to march against a wartime enemy, in order to demand the right to elect their own officials.
- The passage of Lex Trebonia forbade the co-opting of colleagues to fill vacant positions on tribunes in order to sway voting in favor of patrician blocs over plebeians.
- Throughout the 4th century BCE, a series of reforms were passed that required all laws passed by the plebeian council to have the full force of law over the entire population. This gave the plebeian tribunes a positive political impact over the entire population for the first time in Roman history.
- In 445 BCE, the plebeians demanded the right to stand for election as consul. Ultimately, a compromise was reached in which consular command authority was granted to a select number of military tribunes.
- The Licinio-Sextian law was passed in 367 BCE; it addressed the economic plight of the plebeians and prevented the election of further patrician magistrates.
- In the decades following the passage of the Licinio-Sextian law, further legislation was enacted that granted political equality to the plebeians. Nonetheless, it remained difficult for a plebeian from an unknown family to enter the Senate, due to the rise of a new patricio-plebeian aristocracy that was less interested in the plight of the average plebeian.

Key Terms

- **Plebeian** – A general body of free Roman citizens who were part of the lower strata of society.
- **Patricians** – A group of ruling class families in ancient Rome.

In the first few centuries of the Roman Republic, a number of developments affected the relationship between the government and the Roman people, particularly in regard to how that relationship differed across the separate strata of society.

The Patrician Era (509-367 BCE)

The last king of Rome, Lucius Tarquinius Superbus, was overthrown in 509 BCE. One of the biggest changes that occurred as a result was the establishment of two chief magistrates, called consuls, who were elected by the citizens of Rome for an annual term. This stood in stark contrast to the previous system, in which a king was elected by senators, for life. Built in to the consul system were checks on authority, since each consul could provide balance to the decisions made by his colleague. Their limited terms of office also opened them up to the possibility of prosecution in the event of abuses of power. However, when consuls exercised their political powers in tandem, the magnitude and influence they wielded was hardly different from that of the old kings.

In 494 BCE, Rome was at war with two neighboring tribes, and plebeian soldiers refused to march against the enemy, instead seceding to the Aventine Hill. There, the plebeian soldiers took advantage of the situation to demand the right to elect their own officials. The patricians assented to their demands, and the plebeian soldiers returned to battle. The new offices that were created as a result came to be known as "plebeian tribunes," and they were to be assisted by "plebeian aediles."

In the early years of the republic, plebeians were not permitted to hold magisterial office. Tribunes and aediles were technically not magistrates, since they were only elected by fellow plebeians, as opposed to the unified population of plebeians and patricians. Although plebeian tribunes regularly attempted to block legislation they considered



Figure 117 This 18th century drawing shows Gaius Gracchus, tribune of the people, presiding over the plebeian council.

unfavorable, patricians could still override their veto with the support of one or more other tribunes. Tension over this imbalance of power led to the passage of Lex Trebonia, which forbade the co-opting of colleagues to fill vacant positions on tribunes in order to sway voting in favor of one or another bloc. Throughout the 4th century BCE, a series of reforms were passed that required all laws passed by

the plebeian council to have equal force over the entire population, regardless of status as

patrician or plebeian. This gave the plebeian tribunes a positive political impact over the entire population for the first time in Roman history.

In 445 BCE, the plebeians demanded the right to stand for election as consul. The Roman Senate initially refused them this right, but ultimately a compromise was reached in which consular command authority was granted to a select number of military tribunes, who, in turn, were elected by the centuriate assembly with veto power being retained by the senate.

Around 400 BCE, during a series of wars that were fought against neighboring tribes, the plebeians demanded concessions for the disenfranchisement they experienced as foot soldiers fighting for spoils of war that they were never to see. As a result, the Licinio-Sextian law was eventually passed in 367 BCE, which addressed the economic plight of the plebeians and prevented the election of further patrician magistrates.

The Conflict of the Orders Ends (367-287 BCE)

In the decades following the passage of the Licinio-Sextian law, further legislation was enacted that granted political equality to the plebeians. Nonetheless, it remained difficult for a plebeian from an unknown family to enter the Senate. In fact, the very presence of a long-standing nobility, and the Roman population's deep respect for it, made it very difficult for individuals from unknown families to be elected to high office. Additionally, elections could be expensive, neither senators nor magistrates were paid for their services, and the Senate usually did not reimburse magistrates for expenses incurred during their official duties, providing many barriers to the entry of high political office by the non-affluent.

Ultimately, a new patricio-plebeian aristocracy emerged and replaced the old patrician nobility. Whereas the old patrician nobility existed simply on the basis of being able to run for office, the new aristocracy existed on the basis of affluence. Although a small number of plebeians had achieved the same standing as the patrician families of the past, new plebeian aristocrats were less interested in the plight of the average plebeian than were the old patrician aristocrats. For a time, the plebeian plight was mitigated, due higher employment, income, and patriotism that was wrought by a series of wars in which Rome was engaged; these things eliminated the threat of plebeian unrest. But by 287 BCE, the economic conditions of the plebeians deteriorated as a result of widespread indebtedness,

and the plebeians sought relief. Roman senators, most of whom were also creditors, refused to give in to the plebeians' demands, resulting in the first plebeian secession to Janiculum Hill.

In order to end the plebeian secession, a dictator, Quintus Hortensius, was appointed. Hortensius, who was himself a plebeian, passed a law known as the "Hortensian Law." This law ended the requirement that an *auctoritas patrum* be passed before a bill could be considered by either the plebeian council or the tribal assembly, thus removing the final patrician senatorial check on the plebeian council. The requirement was not changed, however, in the centuriate assembly. This provided a loophole through which the patrician senate could still deter plebeian legislative influence.

6.3.4: Art and Literature in the Roman Republic

Culture flourished during the Roman Republic with the emergence of great authors, such as Cicero and Lucretius, and with the development of Roman relief and portraiture sculpture.

Learning Objective

- Recognize the wide extent of art and literature created during the Roman Republic

Key Points

- Roman literature was, from its very inception, influenced heavily by Greek authors. Some of the earliest works we possess are of historical epics that tell the early military history of Rome. However, authors diversified their genres as the Republic expanded.
- Cicero is one of the most famous Republican authors, and his letters provide detailed information about an important period in Roman history.
- Romans typically produced historical sculptures in relief, as opposed to Greek free-standing sculpture. Small sculptures were considered luxury items, while moulded relief decoration in pottery vessels and small figurines were produced in great quantities for a wider section of the population.
- The most well-known surviving examples of Roman painting consist of the wall paintings from Pompeii and Herculaneum that were preserved in the aftermath of

the fatal eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE.

- Veristic portraiture is a hallmark of Roman art during the Republic, though its use began to diminish during the 1st century BCE as civil wars threatened the empire and individual strong men began amassing more power.

Key Terms

- **Veristic portraiture** – A hyper-realistic portrayal of the subject's facial characteristics; a common style of portraiture in the early to mid-Republic.
- **Cicero** – A Roman philosopher, politician, lawyer, orator, political theorist, consul, and constitutionalist.

Literature

Roman literature was, from its very inception, heavily influenced by Greek authors. Some of the earliest works we possess are historical epics telling the early military history of Rome, similar to the Greek epic narratives of Homer, Herodotus, and Thucydides. Virgil, though generally considered to be an Augustan poet, represents the pinnacle of Roman epic poetry. His *Aeneid* tells the story of the flight of Aeneas from Troy, and his settlement of the city that would become Rome. As the Republic expanded, authors began to produce poetry, comedy, history, and tragedy. Lucretius, in his *De rerum natura* (*On the Nature of Things*), attempted to explicate science in an epic poem. The genre of satire was also common in Rome, and satires were written by, among others, Juvenal and Persius.

The Age of Cicero

Cicero has traditionally been considered the master of Latin prose. The writing he produced from approximately 80 BCE until his death in 43 BCE, exceeds that of any



Figure 118 A mid-first century CE bust of Cicero, in the Capitoline Museums, Rome.

Latin author whose work survives, in terms of quantity and variety of genre and subject matter. It also possesses unsurpassed stylistic excellence. Cicero's many works can be divided into four groups: letters, rhetorical treatises, philosophical works, and orations. His letters provide detailed information about an important period in Roman history, and offers a vivid picture of public and private life among the Roman governing class. Cicero's works on oratory are our most valuable Latin sources for ancient theories on education and rhetoric. His philosophical works were the basis of moral philosophy during the Middle Ages, and his speeches inspired many European political leaders, as well as the founders of the United States.

Art

Early Roman art was greatly influenced by the art of Greece and the neighboring Etruscans, who were also greatly influenced by Greek art via trade. As the Roman Republic conquered Greek territory, expanding its imperial domain throughout the Hellenistic world, official and patrician sculpture grew out of the Hellenistic style that many Romans encountered during their campaigns, making it difficult to distinguish truly Roman elements from elements of Greek style. This was especially true since much of what survives of Greek sculpture are actually copies made of Greek originals by Romans. By the 2nd century BCE, most sculptors working within Rome were Greek, many of whom were enslaved following military conquests, and whose names were rarely recorded with the work they created. Vast numbers of Greek statues were also imported to Rome as a result of conquest as well as trade.

Rather than create free-standing works depicting heroic exploits from history or mythology, as the Greeks had, the Romans produced historical works in relief. Small sculptures were considered luxury items and were frequently the object of client-patron relationships. The silver Warren Cup and glass Lycurgus cup are examples of the high quality works that were produced during this period. For a wider section of the population, molded relief decoration in pottery vessels and small figurines were produced in great quantities, and were often of great quality.

In the 3rd century BCE, Greek art taken during wars became popular, and many Roman homes were decorated with landscapes by Greek artists.

Of the vast body of Roman painting that once existed, only a few examples survive to the modern-age. The most well-known surviving examples of Roman painting are the wall paintings from Pompeii and Herculaneum that were preserved in the aftermath of the fatal eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE. A large number of paintings also survived in the catacombs of Rome, dating from the 3rd century CE to 400, prior to the Christian age, demonstrating a continuation of the domestic decorative tradition for use in humble burial chambers. Wall painting was not considered high art in either Greece or Rome. Sculpture and panel painting, usually consisting of tempera or encaustic painting on wooden panels, were considered more prestigious art forms.

A large number of Fayum mummy portraits, bust portraits on wood added to the outside of mummies by the Romanized middle class, exist in Roman Egypt. Although these are in

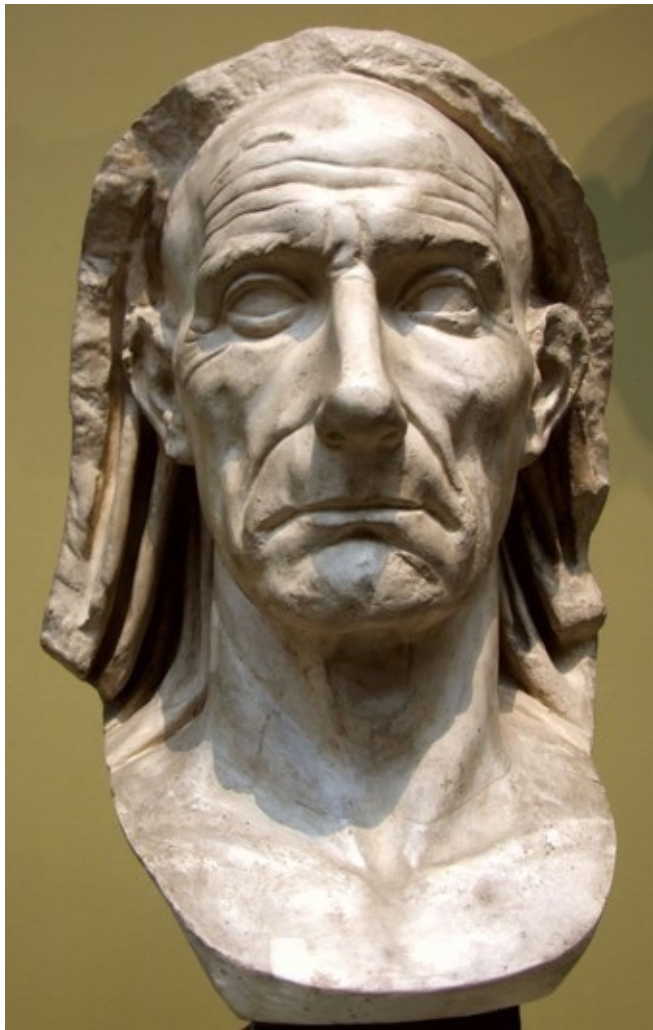


Figure 119 Veristic portraiture of an Old Man. Verism refers to a hyper-realistic portrayal of the subject's facial characteristics.

some ways distinctively local, they are also broadly representative of the Roman style of painted portraits.

Roman portraiture during the Republic is identified by its considerable realism, known as veristic portraiture. Verism refers to a hyper-realistic portrayal of the subject's facial characteristics. The style originated from Hellenistic Greece; however, its use in Republican Rome and survival throughout much of the Republic is due to Roman values, customs, and political life. As with other forms of Roman art, Roman portraiture borrowed certain details from Greek art, but adapted these to their own needs. Veristic images often show their male subject with receding hairlines, deep wrinkles, and even with warts. While the face of the portrait was often shown with incredible detail and

likeness, the body of the subject would be idealized, and did not seem to correspond to the age shown in the face.

Portrait sculpture during the period utilized youthful and classical proportions, evolving later into a mixture of realism and idealism. Advancements were also made in relief sculptures, often depicting Roman victories. The Romans, however, completely lacked a tradition of figurative vase-painting comparable to that of the ancient Greeks, which the Etruscans had also emulated.

The Late Republic

The use of veristic portraiture began to diminish during the Late Republic in the 1st century BCE. During this time, civil wars threatened the empire and individual men began to gain more power. The portraits of Pompey the Great and Julius Caesar, two political rivals who were also the most powerful generals in the Republic, began to change the style of portraits and their use. The portraits of Pompey the Great were neither fully idealized, nor were they created in the same veristic style of Republican senators. Pompey borrowed a specific parting and curl of his hair from Alexander the Great, linking Pompey visually to Alexander's likeness, and triggering his audience to associate him with Alexander's characteristics and qualities.



Figure 120 The portraits of Pompey the Great were neither fully idealized, nor were they created in the same veristic style of Republican senators. This bust clearly shows the specific parting and curl of his hair that would have likened him to Alexander the Great.

6.3.5: Republican Wars and Conquest

By the end of the mid-Republic, Rome had achieved military dominance on both the Italian peninsula and within the Mediterranean.

Learning Objective

- Describe the key results and effects of major Republican wars

Key Points

- Early Roman Republican wars were wars of both expansion and defense, aimed at protecting Rome from neighboring cities and nations, and establishing its territory within the region.
- The Samnite Wars were fought against the Etruscans and effectively finished off all vestiges of Etruscan power by 282 BCE.
- By the middle of the 3rd century and the end of the Pyrrhic War, Rome had effectively dominated the Italian peninsula and won an international military reputation.
- Over the course of the three Punic Wars, Rome completely defeated Hannibal and razed Carthage to the ground, thereby acquiring all of Carthage's North African and Spanish territories.
- After four Macedonian Wars, Rome had established its first permanent foothold in the Greek world, and divided the Macedonian Kingdom into four client republics.

Key Terms

- **Punic Wars** – A series of three wars fought between Rome and Carthage, from 264 BCE to 146 BCE, which resulted in the complete destruction of Carthage.
- **Pyrrhus** – Greek general and statesman of the Hellenistic era. Later he became king of Epirus (r. 306-302, 297- 272 BCE) and Macedon (r. 288-284, 273-272 BCE). He was one of the strongest opponents of early Rome. Some of his battles, though successful, cost him heavy losses, from which the term "Pyrrhic victory" was coined.

The map shows the territory of Rome and her allies between 500 BCE and 272 BCE. It shows that in 500 the territory only included the city of Rome and its immediate surroundings, including Ostia and Veii. In 338, after the Latin war, the territory expanded a bit to the north and east. It also expanded more considerably to the south, encompassing Antium, Terracina, and Capua. In 298, at the start of the 3rd Samnite war, the territory expanded south to include Napolis and also expanded east in an upside U shape to include Marsi, Aequiculi, Vestini, Marricini, Fretani, and the cities of Arpi, Luceria, and Asculum on the east coast. In 290, at the end of the 3rd Samnite war, the territory

expanded to include the central interior of present-day Italy. In 272, at the end of the Pyrrhic war, the territory expanded to include all of present-day southern Italy. In 264, at



Figure 121 This map shows the expansion of Roman territory through the various wars fought during the Republican period.

the start of the 1st Punic war, the territory expanded to include large portions of present-day northern Italy, as far north as Pisae and Ariminum. Finally, at the start of the 2nd Punic war, the territory expanded farther north, in addition to covering Corsica, Sardinia, and most of Sicily.

Early Republic:

Early Campaigns (458-396 BCE)

The first Roman Republican wars were wars of both expansion and defense, aimed at protecting Rome from neighboring cities and nations, as well as

establishing its territory in the region. Initially, Rome's immediate neighbors were either Latin towns and villages or tribal Sabines from the Apennine hills beyond. One by one, Rome defeated both the persistent Sabines and the nearby Etruscan and Latin cities. By the end of this period, Rome had effectively secured its position against all immediate threats.

Expansion into Italy and the Samnite Wars (343-282 BCE)

The First Samnite War, of 343 BCE-341 BCE, was a relatively short affair. The Romans beat the Samnites in two battles, but were forced to withdraw from the war before they could pursue the conflict further, due to the revolt of several of their Latin allies in the Latin War. The Second Samnite War, from 327 BCE-304 BCE, was much longer and more serious for both the Romans and Samnites, but by 304 BCE the Romans had effectively annexed the greater part of the Samnite territory and founded several colonies therein. Seven years after their defeat, with Roman dominance of the area seemingly assured, the Samnites rose again and defeated a Roman army in 298 BCE, to open the Third Samnite

War. With this success in hand, they managed to bring together a coalition of several of Rome's enemies, but by 282 BCE, Rome finished off the last vestiges of Etruscan power in the region.

Pyrrhic War (280-275 BCE)

By the beginning of the 3rd century BCE, Rome had established itself as a major power on the Italian Peninsula, but had not yet come into conflict with the dominant military powers in the Mediterranean Basin at the time: the Carthage and Greek kingdoms. When a diplomatic dispute between Rome and a Greek colony erupted into a naval confrontation, the Greek colony appealed for military aid to Pyrrhus, ruler of the northwestern Greek kingdom of Epirus. Motivated by a personal desire for military accomplishment, Pyrrhus landed a Greek army of approximately 25,000 men on Italian soil in 280 BCE. Despite early victories, Pyrrhus found his position in Italy untenable. Rome steadfastly refused to negotiate with Pyrrhus as long as his army remained in Italy. Facing unacceptably heavy losses with each encounter with the Roman army, Pyrrhus withdrew from the peninsula (thus giving rise to the term "pyrrhic victory").

In 275 BCE, Pyrrhus again met the Roman army at the Battle of Beneventum. While Beneventum's outcome was indecisive, it led to Pyrrhus's complete withdrawal from Italy, due to the decimation of his army following years of foreign campaigns, and the diminishing likelihood of further material gains. These conflicts with Pyrrhus would have a positive effect on Rome. Rome had shown it was capable of pitting its armies successfully against the dominant military powers of the Mediterranean, and that the Greek kingdoms were incapable of defending their colonies in Italy and abroad. Rome quickly moved into southern Italia, subjugating and dividing the Greek colonies. By the middle of the 3rd century, Rome effectively dominated the Italian peninsula, and had won an international military reputation.

Mid-Republic:

Punic Wars

The First Punic War began in 264 BCE, when Rome and Carthage became interested in using settlements within Sicily to solve their own internal conflicts. The war saw land battles in Sicily early on, but focus soon shifted to naval battles around Sicily and Africa.

Before the First Punic War, there was essentially no Roman navy. The new war in Sicily against Carthage, a great naval power, forced Rome to quickly build a fleet and train sailors. Though the first few naval battles of the First Punic War were catastrophic disasters for Rome, Rome was eventually able to beat the Carthaginians and leave them without a fleet or sufficient funds to raise another. For a maritime power, the loss of Carthage's access to the Mediterranean stung financially and psychologically, leading the Carthaginians to sue for peace.

Continuing distrust led to the renewal of hostilities in the Second Punic War, when, in 218 BCE, Carthaginian commander Hannibal attacked a Spanish town with diplomatic ties to Rome. Hannibal then crossed the Italian Alps to invade Italy. Hannibal's successes in Italy began immediately, but his brother, Hasdrubal, was defeated after he crossed the Alps on the Metaurus River. Unable to defeat Hannibal on Italian soil, the Romans boldly sent an army to Africa under Scipio Africanus, with the intention of threatening the Carthaginian capital. As a result, Hannibal was recalled to Africa, and defeated at the Battle of Zama.

Carthage never managed to recover after the Second Punic War, and the Third Punic War that followed was, in reality, a simple punitive mission to raze the city of Carthage to the ground. Carthage was almost defenseless, and when besieged offered immediate surrender, conceding to a string of outrageous Roman demands. The Romans refused the surrender and the city was stormed and completely destroyed after a short siege. Ultimately, all of Carthage's North African and Spanish territories were acquired by Rome.

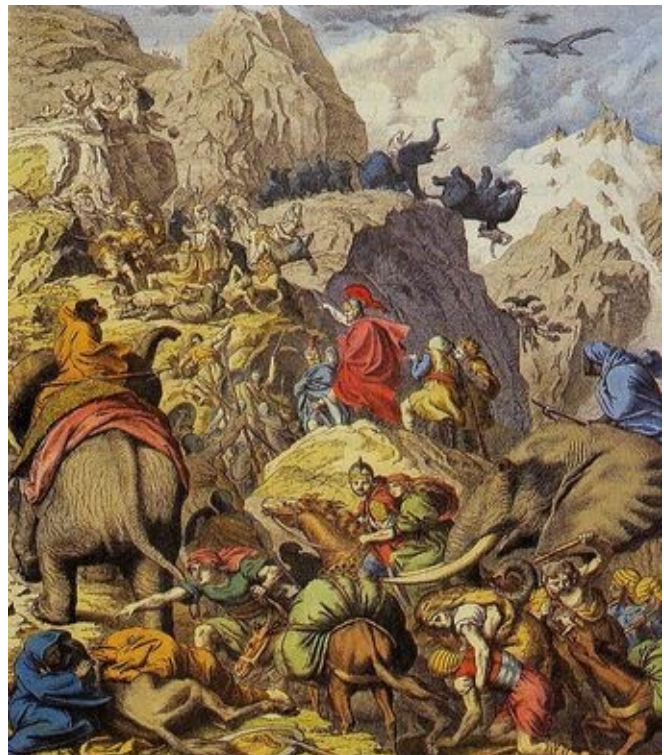


Figure 122 Hannibal's Famous Crossing of the Alps.

Macedon and Greece

Rome's preoccupation with its war in Carthage provided an opportunity for Philip V of the

kingdom of Macedonia, located in the northern part of the Greek peninsula, to attempt to extend his power westward. Over the next several decades, Rome clashed with Macedon to protect their Greek allies throughout the First, Second, and Third Macedonian Wars. By 168 BCE, the Macedonians had been thoroughly defeated, and Rome divided the Macedonian Kingdom into four client republics. After a Fourth Macedonian War, and nearly a century of constant crisis management in Greece (which almost always was a result of internal instability when Rome pulled out), Rome decided to divide Macedonia into two new Roman provinces, Achaëa and Epirus.

6.3.6: Crises of the Republic

The 1st century BCE saw tensions between patricians and plebeians erupt into violence, as the Republic became increasingly more divided and unstable.

Learning Objective

- Explain how crises in the 1st century BCE further destabilized the Roman Republic

Key Points

- Though the causes and attributes of individual crises varied throughout the decades, an underlying theme of conflict between the aristocracy and ordinary citizens drove the majority of actions.
- The Gracchi brothers, Tiberius and Gaius, introduced a number of populist agrarian and land reforms in the 130s and 120s BCE that were heavily opposed by the patrician Senate. Both brothers were murdered by mob violence after political stalemates.
- Political instability continued, as populist Marius and optimates Sulla engaged in a series of conflicts that culminated in Sulla seizing power and marching to Asia Minor against the decrees of the Senate, and Marius seizing power in a coup back at Rome.
- The Catilinarian Conspiracy discredited the populist party, in turn repairing the image of the Senate, which had come to be seen as weak and not worthy of such violent attack.
- Under the terms of the First Triumvirate, Pompey's arrangements would be ratified and Caesar would be elected consul in 59 BCE; he subsequently served as

governor of Gaul for five years. Crassus was promised the consulship later.

- The triumvirate crumbled in the wake of growing political violence and Crassus and Caesar's daughter's death.
- A resolution was passed by the Senate that declared that if Caesar did not lay down his arms by July 49 BCE, he would be considered an enemy of the Republic. Meanwhile, Pompey was granted dictatorial powers over the Republic.
- On January 10, 49 BCE, Caesar crossed the Rubicon and marched towards Rome. Pompey, the consuls, and the Senate all abandoned Rome for Greece, and Caesar entered the city unopposed.

Key Terms

- **Gracchi Brothers** – Brothers Tiberius and Gaius, Roman plebeian nobles who both served as tribunes in the late 2nd century BCE. They attempted to pass land reform legislation that would redistribute the major patrician landholdings among the plebeians.
- **Plebeian** – A general body of free Roman citizens who were part of the lower strata of society.
- **Patrician** – A group of ruling class families in ancient Rome.

The Crises of the Roman Republic refers to an extended period of political instability and social unrest that culminated in the demise of the Roman Republic, and the advent of the Roman Empire from about 134 BCE-44 BCE. The exact dates of this period of crisis are unclear or are in dispute from scholar to scholar. Though the causes and attributes of individual crises varied throughout the decades, an underlying theme of conflict between the aristocracy and ordinary citizens drove the majority of actions.

Optimates were a traditionalist majority of the late Roman Republic. They wished to limit the power of the popular assemblies and the Tribune of the Plebeians, and to extend the power of the Senate, which was viewed as more dedicated to the interests of the aristocrats. In particular, they were concerned with the rise of individual generals, who, backed by the tribunate, the assemblies, and their own soldiers, could shift power from the Senate and aristocracy. Many members of this faction were so-classified because they used the backing of the aristocracy and the Senate to achieve personal goals, not

necessarily because they favored the aristocracy over the lower classes. Similarly, the populists did not necessarily champion the lower classes, but often used their support to achieve personal goals.

Following a period of great military successes and economic failures of the early Republican period, many plebeian calls for reform among the classes had been quieted. However, many new slaves were being imported from abroad, causing an unemployment crisis among the lower classes. A flood of unemployed citizens entered Rome, giving rise to populist ideas throughout the city.

The Gracchi Brothers

Tiberius Gracchus took office as a tribune of the plebeians in late 134 BCE. At the time, Roman society was a highly stratified class system with tensions bubbling below the surface. This system consisted of noble families of the senatorial rank (patricians), the knight or equestrian class, citizens (grouped into two or three classes of self-governing

allies of Rome: landowners; and plebs, or tenant freemen, depending on the time period), non-citizens who lived outside of southwestern Italy, and at the bottom, slaves. The government owned large tracts of farm land that it had gained through invasion or escheat. This land was rented out to either large landowners whose slaves tilled the land, or small

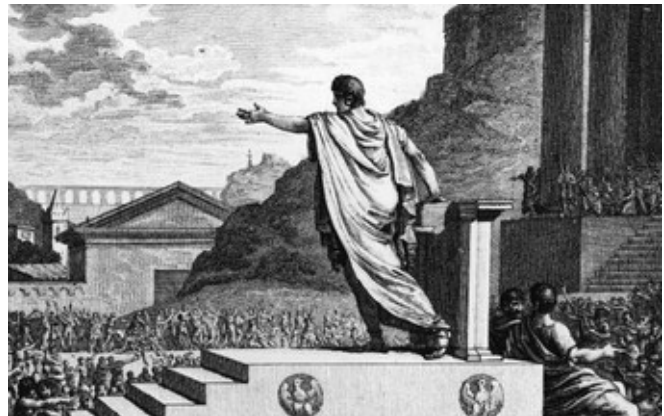


Figure 123 Gaius Gracchus Addressing the People

tenant farmers who occupied the property on the basis of a sub-lease. Beginning in 133 BCE, Tiberius tried to redress the grievances of displaced small tenant farmers. He bypassed the Roman Senate, and passed a law limiting the amount of land belonging to the state that any individual could farm, which resulted in the dissolution of large plantations maintained by rich landowners on public land.

A political back-and-forth ensued in the Senate as the other tribune, Octavius, blocked Tiberius's initiatives, and the Senate denied funds needed for land reform. When Tiberius sought re-election to his one-year term (an unprecedented action), the oligarchic nobles

responded by murdering Tiberius, and mass riots broke out in the city in reaction to the assassination. About nine years later, Tiberius Gracchus's younger brother, Gaius, passed more radical reforms in favor of the poorer plebeians. Once again, the situation ended in violence and murder as Gaius fled Rome and was either murdered by oligarchs or committed suicide. The deaths of the Gracchi brothers marked the beginning of a late Republic trend in which tensions and conflicts erupted in violence.

Marius and Sulla

The next major reformer of the time was Gaius Marius, who like the Gracchi, was a

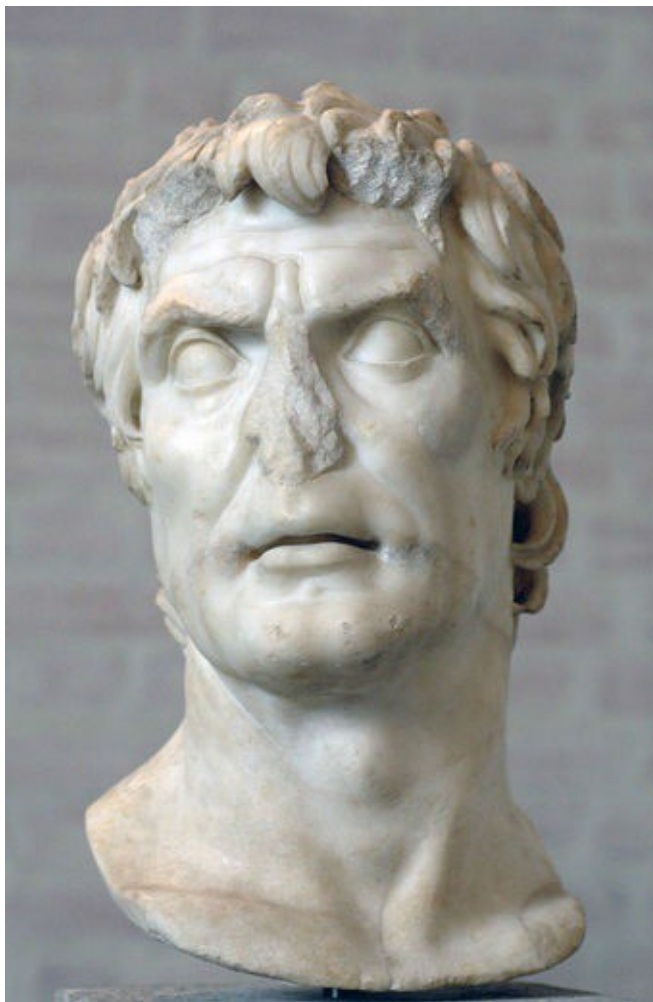


Figure 124 Bust of Sulla

populist who championed the lower classes. He was a general who abolished the property requirement for becoming a soldier, which allowed the poor to enlist in large numbers. Lucius Cornelius Sulla was appointed as Marius's quaestor (supervisor of the financial affairs of the state) in 107 BCE, and later competed with Marius for supreme power. Over the next few decades, he and Marius engaged in a series of conflicts that culminated in Sulla seizing power and marching to Asia Minor against the decrees of the Senate. Marius launched a coup in Sulla's absence, putting to death some of his enemies and instituting a populist regime, but died soon after.

Pompey, Crassus, and the Catilinarian Conspiracy

In 77 BCE, two of Sulla's former

lieutenants, Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus ("Pompey the Great") and Marcus Licinius Crassus, had left Rome to put down uprisings and found the populist party, attacking Sulla's constitution upon their return. In an attempt to forge an agreement with the Populist

Party, both lieutenants promised to dismantle components of Sulla's constitution that the populists found disagreeable, in return for being elected consul. The two were elected in 70 BCE and held true to their word. Four years later, in 66 BCE, a movement to use peaceful means to address the plights of the various classes arose; however, after several failures in achieving their goals, the movement, headed by Lucius Sergius Catilina and based in Faesulae, a hotbed of agrarian agitation, decided to march to Rome and instigate an uprising. Marcus Tullius Cicero, the consul at the time, intercepted messages regarding recruitment and plans, leading the Senate to authorize the assassination of many Catilinarian conspirators in Rome, an action that was seen as stemming from dubious authority. This effectively disrupted the conspiracy and discredited the populist party, in turn repairing the image of the Senate, which had come to be seen as weak and not worthy of such violent attack.

First Triumvirate

In 62 BCE, Pompey returned from campaigning in Asia to find that the Senate, elated by its successes against the Catiline conspirators, was unwilling to ratify any of Pompey's arrangements, leaving Pompey powerless. Julius Caesar returned from his governorship in Spain a year later and, along with Crassus, established a private agreement with Pompey known as the First Triumvirate. Under the terms of this agreement, Pompey's arrangements would be ratified and Caesar would be elected consul in 59 BCE, subsequently serving as governor of Gaul for five years. Crassus was promised the consulship later.

When Caesar became consul, he saw the passage of Pompey's arrangements through the Senate, at times using violent means to ensure their passage. Caesar also facilitated the election of patrician Publius Clodius Pulcher to the tribunate in 58 BCE, and Clodius sidelined Caesar's senatorial opponents, Cato and Cicero. Clodius eventually formed armed gangs that terrorized Rome and began to attack Pompey's followers, who formed counter-gangs in response, marking the end of the political alliance between Pompey and Caesar. Though the triumvirate was briefly renewed in the face of political opposition for the consulship from Domitius Ahenobarbus, Crassus's death during an expedition against the Kingdom of Parthia, and the death of Pompey's wife, Julia, who was also Caesar's daughter, severed any remaining bonds between Pompey and Caesar.

Beginning in the summer of 54 BCE, a wave of political corruption and violence swept Rome, reaching a climax in January 52 BCE, when Clodius was murdered in a gang war. Caesar presented an ultimatum to the Senate on January 1, 49 BCE, which was ultimately rejected. Subsequently, a resolution was passed that declared that if Caesar did not lay down his arms by July, he would be considered an enemy of the Republic. The senators adopted Pompey as their champion, and on January 7, Pompey was granted dictatorial powers over the Republic by the Senate. Pompey's army, however, was composed mainly of untested conscripts, and on January 10, Caesar crossed the Rubicon with his more experienced forces in defiance of Roman laws, and marched towards Rome. Pompey, the consuls, and the Senate all abandoned Rome for Greece, in the face of Caesar's rapidly advancing forces, and Caesar entered the city unopposed.

Attributions

- The Establishment of the Roman Republic
 - "Overthrow of the Roman monarchy."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Overthrow_of_the_Roman_monarchy. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Roman Kingdom." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Kingdom. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Interrex." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interrex>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Roman Republic." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Republic. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Tizian_094.jpg." https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tizian_094.jpg. Wikimedia Public domain.
 - "N03Brutus-u-Lucretia.jpg." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:N03Brutus-u-Lucretia.jpg>. Wikipedia Public domain.
- Structure of the Republic
 - "Constitution of the Roman Republic."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution_of_the_Roman_Republic. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Senate of the Roman Republic."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senate_of_the_Roman_Republic. Wikipedia CC

BY-SA.

- "Roman SPQR Banner."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spqr%23mediaviewer/File:Roman_SPQR_banner.svg. Wikipedia CC BY 3.0.
- "Curia Iulia - The Roman Senate House."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Senate%23mediaviewer/File:Curia_Iulia.JPG. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- Roman Society Under the Republic
 - "Lex Trebonia (448 BC)."
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lex_Trebonia_\(448_BC\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lex_Trebonia_(448_BC)). Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Conflict of the Orders." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conflict_of_the_Orders. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Social class in ancient Rome."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_class_in_ancient_Rome. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Lex Licinia Sextia." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lex_Licinia_Sextia. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Roman Republic." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Republic. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Gaius_Gracchus_Tribune_of_the_People.jpg."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gaius_Gracchus_Tribune_of_the_People.jpg. Wikimedia Public domain.
- Art and Literature in the Roman Republic
 - "Roman Republic: The arts."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Republic#The_arts. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Roman art." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_art. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Cicero - Musei Capitolini."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cicero%23mediaviewer/File:Cicero_-_Musei_Capitolini.JPG. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- "Pompeius." <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pompejus.JPG>.
Wikimedia Commons Public domain.
- "Old man Vatican." http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Old_man_vatican_pushkin01.jpg.
Wikimedia Commons CC BY-SA.
- Republican Wars and Conquest
 - "Punic Wars." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Punic_Wars. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Roman Republic." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Republic. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Roman Conquest of Italy." https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Roman_conquest_of_Italy.PNG.
Wikimedia Public domain.
 - "Depiction of Hannibal." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Punic_Wars%23mediaviewer/File:Hannibal3.jpg.
Wikipedia Public domain.
- Crises of the Republic
 - "Roman Republic." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Republic. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Gracchi." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gracchi>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Plebs." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plebs>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Crisis of the Roman Republic." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crisis_of_the_Roman_Republic. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Sulla." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sulla>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "plebeian." <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/plebeian>. Wiktionary CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "patrician." <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/patrician>. Wiktionary CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Gaius Gracchus Tribune of the People." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gracchi%23mediaviewer/File:Gaius_Gracchus_Tribune_of_the_P Wikipedia Public domain.
 - "Sulla Glyptothek Munich." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sulla%23mediaviewer/File:Sulla_Glyptothek_Munich_309.jpg. Wikipedia Public domain.

6.4: The Roman Empire

6.4.1: Julius Caesar

Julius Caesar was a late Republic statesman and general who waged civil war against the Roman Senate, defeating many patrician conservatives before he declared himself dictator.

Learning Objective

- Explain the rise of Julius Caesar and his various successes

Key Points

- In 60 BCE, Julius Caesar, Marcus Licinius Crassus, and Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (Pompey the Great) formed a political alliance, known as the First Triumvirate, which was to dominate Roman politics for several years, though their populist tactics were opposed by the conservative Senate.
- Caesar enjoyed great success as commander in the Gallic Wars. Upon conclusion of the wars, he refused to return to Rome as ordered by the Senate, and instead, crossed the Rubicon in 49 BCE with a legion, entering Roman territory under arms.
- Caesar fought in a civil war against his old colleague, Pompey, who had aligned himself with conservative interests in the Senate. Caesar quickly defeated his rival and many other Senate conservatives who had previously opposed him.
- With most of his enemies gone, Caesar installed himself as dictator in perpetuity. As dictator, he instituted a series of reforms and, most notably, created the Julian calendar.
- Caesar was assassinated in 44 BCE by his remaining enemies in the Senate, throwing Rome into another period of chaos and civil war.

Key Terms

- **Dictator** – During Caesar's time, in the late Roman Republic, ruler for life. In the early Republic, by contrast, a dictator was a general appointed by the Senate, who served temporarily during a national emergency.
- **Julius Caesar** – A Roman general, statesman, consul, and author, who played a critical role in the events that led to the demise of the Roman Republic and the rise

of the Roman Empire.

- **Pompey** – A military and political leader of the late Roman Republic, who represented the Roman Senate in a civil war against Julius Caesar.

Gaius Julius Caesar was a Roman general, statesman, consul, and notable author of Latin prose. He played a critical role in the events that led to the demise of the Roman Republic and the rise of the Roman Empire. In 60 BCE, Caesar, Marcus Licinius Crassus, and Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (Pompey the Great) formed a political alliance, known as the First Triumvirate, which was to dominate Roman politics for several years. Caesar made the initial overtures that led to the informal alliance. An acclaimed military commander who had also served in a variety of political offices, Caesar sought election as consul in 59 BCE, along with two other candidates. The election was particularly contentious, with corruption occurring on all sides. Caesar won, as well as conservative Marcus Bibulus, but saw that he could further his political influence with Crassus and Pompey. Their attempts to amass power through populist tactics were opposed by the conservative ruling class within the Roman Senate, among them Cato the Younger and Cicero. Meanwhile, Caesar's victories in the Gallic Wars, completed by 51 BCE, extended Rome's territory to the English Channel and the Rhine River. Caesar became the first Roman general to cross both when he built a bridge across the Rhine and conducted the first invasion of Britain.

These achievements granted Caesar unmatched military power and threatened to eclipse the standing of his colleague, Pompey, who had realigned himself with the Senate after the death of Crassus in 53 BCE. With the Gallic Wars concluded, the Senate ordered Caesar to step down from his military command and return to Rome. Caesar refused and marked his defiance in 49 BCE by crossing the Rubicon (a shallow river in northern Italy) with a legion. In doing so, he deliberately broke the law on imperium and engaged in an open act of insurrection and treason. Civil War ensued, with Pompey representing the Roman Senate forces against Caesar, but Caesar quickly defeated Pompey in 48 BCE, and dispatched Pompey's supporters in the following year. During this time, many staunch Senate conservatives, such as Cato the Younger, were either killed or committed suicide, thereby greatly decreasing the number of optimates in Rome.

Caesar as Dictator

After assuming control of the government upon the defeat of his enemies in 45 BCE, Caesar began a program of social and governmental reforms that included the creation of the Julian calendar. He centralized the bureaucracy of the Republic and eventually proclaimed himself "dictator in perpetuity." It is important to note that Caesar did not declare himself *rex* (king), but instead, claimed the title of dictator. Contrary to the negative connotations that the modern use of the word evokes, the Roman dictator was appointed by the Senate during times of emergency as a unilateral decision-maker who could act more quickly than the usual bureaucratic processes that the Republican government would allow. Upon bringing the Roman state out of trouble, the dictator would then resign and restore power back to the Senate. Thus, Caesar's declaration ostensibly remained within the Republican framework of power, though the huge amounts of power he had gathered for himself in practice set him up similar to a monarch.

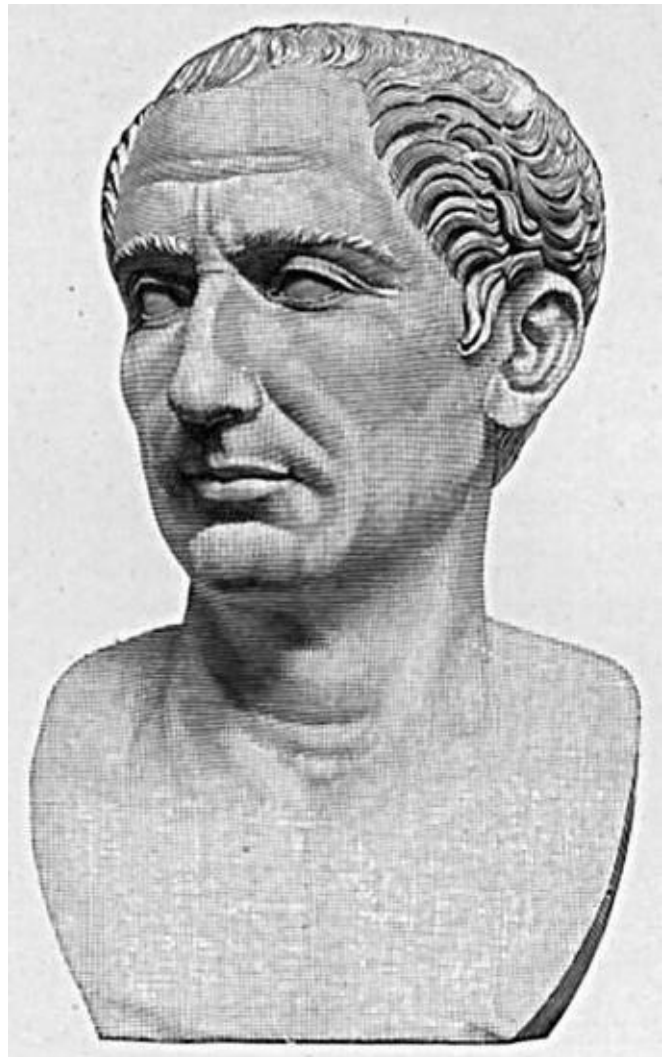


Figure 125 Bust of Julius Caesar.

Caesar used his powers to fill the Senate with his own partisans. He also increased the number of magistrates who were elected each year, which created a large pool of experienced magistrates and allowed Caesar to reward his supporters. He used his powers to appoint many new senators, which eventually raised the Senate's membership to 900. All the appointments were of his own partisans, which robbed the senatorial aristocracy of its prestige and made the Senate increasingly subservient to him. To minimize the risk that another general might attempt to challenge him, Caesar passed a

law that subjected governors to term limits. All of these changes watered down the power of the Senate, which infuriated those used to aristocratic privilege. Such anger proved to be fuel for Caesar's eventual assassination.

Despite the defeat of most of his conservative enemies, however, underlying political conflicts had not been resolved. On the Ides of March (March 15) 44 BCE, Caesar was scheduled to appear at a session of the Senate, and a group of senators led by Marcus Junius Brutus and Gaius Cassius Longinus conspired to assassinate him. Though some of his assassins may have had ulterior personal vendettas against Caesar, Brutus is said to have acted out of concern for the Republic in the face of what he considered to be a monarchical tyrant. Mark Antony, one of Caesar's generals and administrator of Italy during Caesar's campaigns abroad, learned such a plan existed the night before, and attempted to intercept Caesar, but the plotters anticipated this and arranged to meet him outside the site of the session and detain him there. Caesar was stabbed 23 times and lay dead on the ground for some time before officials removed his body.

A new series of civil wars broke out following Caesar's assassination, and the constitutional government of the Republic was never restored. Caesar's adopted heir, Octavian, later known as Augustus, rose to sole power, and the era of the Roman Empire began.

6.4.2: Founding of the Roman Empire

Augustus rose to power after Julius Caesar's assassination, through a series of political and military maneuvers, eventually establishing himself as the first emperor of Rome.

Learning Objective

- Explain the key features of Augustus's reign and the reasons for its successes

Key Points

- Following the assassination of his maternal great-uncle Julius Caesar in 44 BCE, Caesar's will named Octavian as his adopted son and heir when Octavian was only 19 years old.
- By ingratiating himself with his father's legions, Octavian was able to fulfill the military demands of the Roman Senate. He quickly gained both power and prestige

and formed the Second Triumvirate with Antony and Lepidus in 43 BCE.

- By 31 BCE, Octavian had emerged as the sole ruler of Rome, upon the political and military defeat of the two other triumvirs.

Key Terms

- **Mark Antony** – Julius Caesar's right hand man, and a member of the Second Triumvirate. He was eventually defeated by Octavian at the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE.
- **Augustus** – The founder of the Roman Empire, known as Octavian during his early years and during his rise to power.

Augustus is regarded by many scholars as the founder and first emperor of the Roman Empire. He ruled from 27 BCE until his death in 14 CE.

Rise to Power

Augustus was born Gaius Octavius, and in his early years was known as Octavian. He was from an old and wealthy equestrian branch of the plebeian Octavii family. Following the assassination of his maternal great-uncle, Julius Caesar, in 44 BCE, Caesar's will named Octavian as his adopted son and heir when Octavian was only 19 years old. The young Octavian quickly took advantage of the situation and ingratiated himself with both the Roman people and his adoptive father's legions, thereby elevating his status and importance within Rome. Octavian found Mark Antony, Julius Caesar's former colleague and the current consul of Rome, in an uneasy truce with Caesar's assassins, who had been granted general amnesty for their part in the plot. Nonetheless, Antony eventually succeeded in driving most of them out of Rome, using Caesar's eulogy as an opportunity to mount public opinion against the assassins.

Mark Antony began amassing political support, and Octavian set about rivaling it. Eventually, many Caesarian sympathizers began to view Octavian as the lesser evil of the two. Octavian allied himself with optimate factions, despite their opposition to Caesar when he was alive. The optimate orator, Marcus Tullius Cicero, began attacking Antony in a series of speeches, portraying him as a threat to the republican order of Rome. As public opinion against him mounted, Antony fled to Cisalpine Gaul at the end of his consular year.

Octavian further established himself both politically and militarily in the following months. He was declared a senator and granted the power of military command, *imperium*, in 43 BCE, and was further able to leverage his successes to obtain the vacant consulships left by the two defeated consuls of that year.

Octavian eventually reached an uneasy truce with Mark Antony and Marcus Lepidus in October 43 BCE, and together, the three formed the Second Triumvirate to defeat the assassins of Caesar. Following their victory against Brutus at Phillipi, the Triumvirate divided the Roman Republic among themselves and ruled as military dictators. Relations within the Triumvirate were strained as the various members sought greater political power. Civil war between Antony and Octavian was averted in 40 BCE, when Antony married Octavian's sister, Octavia Minor. Despite his marriage, Antony continued a love affair with Cleopatra, the former lover of Caesar and queen of Egypt, further straining political ties to Rome. Octavian used Antony's relationship with Cleopatra to his own advantage, portraying Antony as less committed to Rome. With Lepidus expelled in 36 BCE, the Triumvirate finally disintegrated in the year 33. Finally, disagreements between Octavian and Antony erupted into civil war in the year 31 BCE.



Figure 126 The statue of Augustus of Prima Porta is perhaps one of the best known images of the Emperor Augustus. It portrays the emperor as perpetually youthful, and depicts many of the key propaganda messages that Augustus put forth during his time as emperor.

The Roman Senate, at Octavian's direction, declared war on Cleopatra's regime in Egypt and proclaimed Antony a traitor. Antony was defeated by Octavian at the naval Battle of Actium the same year. Defeated, Antony fled with Cleopatra to Alexandria where they both

committed suicide. With Antony dead, Octavian was left as the undisputed master of the Roman world. Octavian would assume the title Augustus, and reign as the first Roman Emperor.

6.4.3: The Pax Romana

The Pax Romana, which began under Augustus, was a 200-year period of peace in which Rome experienced minimal expansion by military forces.

Learning Objective

- Describe the key reasons for and characteristics of the Pax Romana

Key Points

- The Pax Romana was established under Augustus, and for that reason it is sometimes referred to as the Pax Augusta.
- Augustus closed the Gates of Janus three times to signify the onset of peace: in 29 BCE, 25 BCE, and 13 BCE, likely in conjunction with the Ara Pacis ceremony.
- The Romans regarded peace not as an absence of war, but as the rare situation that existed when all opponents had been beaten down and lost the ability to resist. Thus, Augustus had to persuade Romans that the prosperity they could achieve in the absence of warfare was better for the Empire than the potential wealth and honor acquired when fighting a risky war.
- The Ara Pacis is a prime example of the propaganda Augustus employed to promote the Pax Romana, and depicts images of Roman gods and the city of Rome personified amidst wealth and prosperity.

Key Terms

- **Pax Romana** – The long period of relative peace and minimal expansion by military force experienced by the Roman Empire in the 1st and 2nd centuries CE. Also sometimes known as the Pax Augusta.
- **Ara Pacis Augustae** – The Altar of Augustan Peace, a sacrificial altar that displays imagery of the peace and prosperity Augustus achieved during the Pax Romana.

Augustus's Constitutional Reforms

After the demise of the Second Triumvirate, Augustus restored the outward facade of the free Republic with governmental power vested in the Roman Senate, the executive magistrates, and the legislative assemblies. In reality, however, he retained his autocratic power over the Republic as a military dictator. By law, Augustus held powers granted to him for life by the Senate, including supreme military command and those of tribune and censor. It took several years for Augustus to develop the framework within which a formally republican state could be led under his sole rule.

Augustus passed a series of laws between the years 30 and 2 BCE that transformed the constitution of the Roman Republic into the constitution of the Roman Empire. During this time, Augustus reformed the Roman system of taxation, developed networks of roads with an official courier system, established a standing army, established the Praetorian Guard, created official police and fire-fighting services for Rome, and rebuilt much of the city during his reign.

First Settlement

During the First Settlement, Augustus modified the Roman political system to make it more palatable to the senatorial classes, eschewing the open authoritarianism exhibited by Julius Caesar and Mark Anthony. In 28 BCE, in a calculated move, Augustus eradicated the emergency powers he held as dictator and returned all powers and provinces to the Senate and the Roman people. Members of the Senate were unhappy with this prospect, and in order to appease them, Augustus agreed to a ten-year extension of responsibilities over disorderly provinces. As a result of this, Augustus retained *imperium* over the provinces where the majority of Rome's soldiers were stationed. Augustus also rejected monarchical titles, instead calling himself *princeps civitatis* ("First Citizen"). The resulting constitutional framework became known as the Principate, the first phase of the Roman Empire.

At this time, Augustus was given honorifics that made his full name *Imperator Caesar divi filius Augustus*. *Imperator* stressed military power and victory and emphasized his role as commander-in-chief. *Divi filius* roughly translates to "son of the divine," enhancing his legitimacy as ruler without deifying him completely. The use of Caesar provided a link

between himself and Julius Caesar, who was still very popular among lower classes. Finally, the name Augustus raised associations to Rome's illustrious and majestic traditions, without creating heavy authoritarian overtones.

By the end of the first settlement, Augustus was in an ideal political position. Although he no longer held dictatorial powers, he had created an identity of such influence that authority followed naturally.

Second Settlement

In the wake of Augustus's poor health, a second settlement was announced in 23 BCE. During this time, Augustus outwardly appeared to rein in his constitutional powers, but really continued to extend his dominion throughout the Empire. Augustus renounced his ten-year consulship, but in return, secured the following concessions for himself.

- A seat on the consuls's platform at the front of the Curia
- The right to speak first in a Senate meeting, or *ius primae relationis*
- The right to summon a meeting of the Senate, which was a useful tool for policy making
- Care of Rome's grain supply, or *cura annonae*, which gave him sweeping patronage powers over the plebs

Augustus was also granted the role of *tribunicia potestas*, which enabled him to act as the guardian of the citizens of Rome. This position came with a number of benefits, including the right to propose laws to the Senate whenever he wanted, veto power of laws, and the ability to grant amnesty to any citizen accused of a crime. Though the role of *tribunicia potestas* effectively gave Augustus legislative supremacy, it also had many positive connotations harkening back to the Republic, making Augustus's position less offensive to the aristocracy. Beyond Rome, Augustus was granted *maius imperium*, meaning greater (proconsular) power. This position enabled him to effectively override the orders of any other provincial governor in the Roman Empire, in addition to governing his own provinces and armies.

Augustus and the Pax Romana

The *Pax Romana* (Latin for "Roman peace") was a long period of relative peace and minimal expansion by military forces experienced by the Roman Empire in the 1st and 2nd centuries CE. Since this period was initiated during Augustus's reign, it is sometimes called Pax Augusta. Its span was approximately 206 years (27 BCE to 180 CE).

The *Pax Romana* started after Augustus, then Octavian, met and defeated Mark Antony in the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE. Augustus created a junta of the greatest military magnates and gave himself the titular honor. By binding together these leading magnates into a single title, he eliminated the prospect of civil war. The *Pax Romana* was not immediate, despite the end of the civil war, because fighting continued in Hispania and in the Alps. Despite continuous wars of imperial expansion on the Empire's frontiers and one year-long civil war over the imperial succession, the Roman world was largely free from large-scale conflict for more than two centuries. Augustus dramatically enlarged the Empire, annexing Egypt, Dalmatia, Pannonia, Noricum, and Raetia, expanded possessions in Africa as well as into Germania, and completed the conquest of Hispania. Beyond Rome's frontiers, he secured the Empire with a buffer region of client states, and made peace with the troublesome Parthian Empire through diplomacy.

Augustus closed the Gates of Janus (the set of gates to the Temple of Janus, which was closed in times of peace and opened in times of war) three times. The first time was in 29 BCE and the second in 25 BCE. The third closure is undocumented, but scholars have persuasively dated the event to 13 BCE during the Ara Pacis ceremony, which was held after Augustus and Agrippa jointly returned from pacifying the provinces.

Augustus faced some trouble making peace an acceptable mode of life for the Romans, who had been at war with one power or another continuously for 200 years prior to this period. The Romans regarded peace not as an absence of war, but the rare situation that existed when all opponents had been beaten down and lost the ability to resist. Augustus's challenge was to persuade Romans that the prosperity they could achieve in the absence of war was better for the Empire than the potential wealth and honor acquired from fighting. Augustus succeeded by means of skillful propaganda. Subsequent emperors followed his lead, sometimes producing lavish ceremonies to close the Gates of Janus,

issuing coins with *Pax* on the reverse, and patronizing literature extolling the benefits of the *Pax Romana*.

The Ara Pacis Augustae

The Ara Pacis Augustae, or Altar of Augustan Peace, is one of the best examples of Augustan artistic propaganda and the prime symbol of the new Pax Romana. It was commissioned by the Senate in 13 BCE to honor the peace and bounty established by Augustus following his return from Spain and Gaul. The theme of peace is seen most notably in the east and west walls of the Ara Pacis, each of which had two panels, although only small fragments remain for one panel on each side. On the east side sits an unidentified goddess presumed by scholars to be Tellus, Venus, or Peace within an allegorical scene of prosperity and fertility. Twins sit on her lap along with a cornucopia of



Figure 127 The Tellus Mater Panel of the Ara Pacis.

fruits. Personifications of the wind and sea surround her, each riding on a bird or a sea monster. Beneath the women rests a bull and lamb, both sacrificial animals, and flowering plants fill the empty space. The nearly incomplete second eastern panel appears to depict a female warrior, possibly Roma, amid the spoils of conquest.

Augustus died in 14 CE at the age of 75.

He may have died from natural causes, although unconfirmed rumors swirled that his wife Livia poisoned him. His adopted son (also stepson and former son-in-law), Tiberius, succeeded him to the throne.

6.4.4: The Julio-Claudian Emperors

The Julio-Claudian emperors expanded the boundaries of the Roman Empire and engaged in ambitious construction projects. However, they were met with mixed public reception due to their unique ruling methods.

Learning Objective

- Describe the reigns of the emperors who followed Augustus

Key Points

- Tiberius was the second emperor of the Roman Empire, and was considered one of Rome's greatest generals.
- Tiberius conquered Pannonia, Dalmatia, Raetia, and temporarily, parts of Germania. His conquests laid the foundations for the northern frontier.
- When Tiberius died on March 16, 37 CE, his estate and titles were left to Caligula and Tiberius's grandson, Gemellus. However, Caligula's first act as Princeps was to void Tiberius's will and have Gemellus executed.
- Although Caligula is described as a noble and moderate ruler during the first six months of his reign, sources portray him as a cruel and sadistic tyrant, immediately thereafter.
- In 38 CE, Caligula focused his attention on political and public reform; however, by 39 CE, a financial crisis had emerged as a result of Caligula's use of political payments, which had overextended the state's treasury. Despite financial difficulties, Caligula began a number of construction projects during this time.
- In 41 CE, Caligula was assassinated as part of a conspiracy by officers of the Praetorian Guard, senators, and courtiers.
- Claudius, the fourth emperor of the Roman Empire, was the first Roman Emperor to be born outside of Italy.
- Despite his lack of experience, Claudius was an able and efficient administrator, as well as an ambitious builder. He constructed many roads, aqueducts, and canals across the Empire.
- Claudius's appointment as emperor by the Praetorian Guard damaged his reputation. This was amplified when Claudius became the first emperor to resort to bribery as a means to secure army loyalty. Claudius also rewarded the Praetorian Guard that had named him emperor with 15,000 sesterces.

Key Terms

- **Julio-Claudian dynasty** – The first five Roman emperors who ruled the Roman Empire, including Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, and Nero.

- **Praetorian Guard** – A force of bodyguards used by the Roman emperors. They also served as secret police, and participated in wars.

Tiberius

Tiberius was the second emperor of the Roman Empire and reigned from 14 to 37 CE.

The previous emperor, Augustus, was his stepfather; this officially made him a Julian.

However, his biological father was Tiberius Claudius Nero, making him a Claudian by birth.

Subsequent emperors would continue the blended dynasty of both families for the next 30 years, leading historians to name it the Julio-Claudian Dynasty. Tiberius is also the grand-uncle of Caligula, his successor, the paternal uncle of Claudius, and the great-grand uncle of Nero.

Tiberius is considered one of Rome's greatest generals. During his reign, he conquered Pannonia, Dalmatia, Raetia, and temporarily, parts of Germania. His conquests laid the foundations for the northern frontier. However, he was known by contemporaries to be dark, reclusive, and somber—a ruler who never really wanted to be emperor. The tone was set early in his reign when the Senate convened to validate his position as Princeps. During the proceedings, Tiberius attempted to play the part of the reluctant public servant, but came across as derisive and obstructive. His direct orders appeared vague, inspiring more debate than action and leaving the

Senate to act on its own. After the death of Tiberius's son in 23 CE, the emperor became even more reclusive, leaving the administration largely in the hands of his unscrupulous Praetorian Prefects.

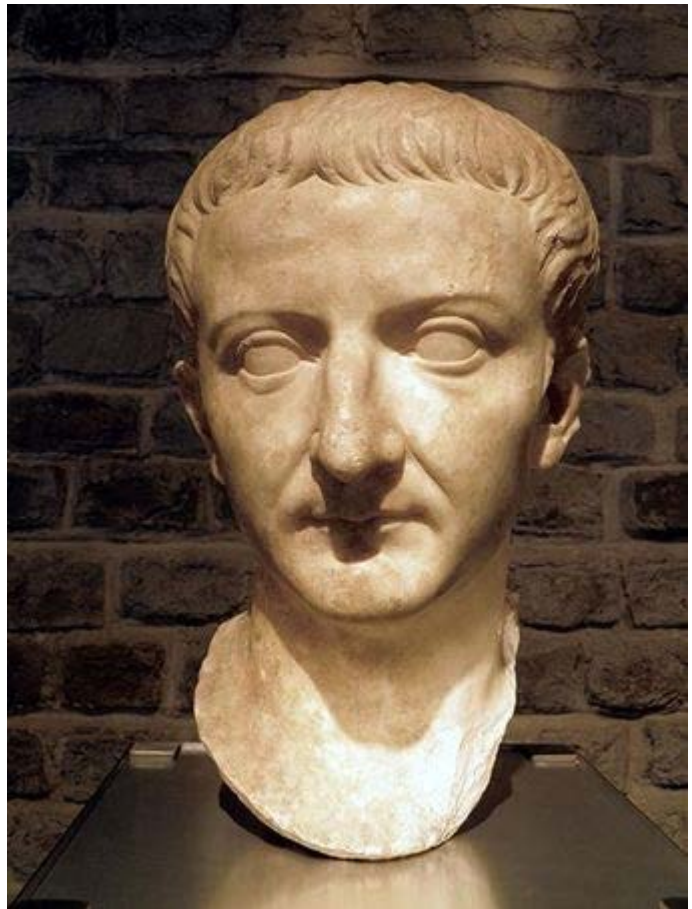


Figure 128 Tiberius, Romisch-Germanisches Museum, Cologne Bust of Tiberius.

Caligula

When Tiberius died on March 16, 37 CE, his estate and titles were left to Caligula and Tiberius's grandson, Gemellus, with the intention that they would rule as joint heirs. However, Caligula's first act as Princeps was to void Tiberius's will and have Gemellus executed. When Tiberius died, he had not been well liked. Caligula, on the other hand, was almost universally heralded upon his assumption of the throne. There are few surviving sources on Caligula's reign. Caligula's first acts as emperor were generous in spirit, but political in nature. He granted bonuses to the military, including the Praetorian Guard, city troops, and the army outside of Italy. He destroyed Tiberius's treason papers and declared that treason trials would no longer continue as a practice, even going so far as to recall those who had already been sent into exile for treason. He also helped those who had been adversely affected by the imperial tax system, banished certain sexual deviants, and put on large public spectacles, such as gladiatorial games, for the common people.

Although he is described as a noble and moderate ruler during the first six months of his reign, sources portray him as a cruel and sadistic tyrant immediately thereafter. The transitional point seems to center around an illness Caligula experienced in October of 37 CE. It is unclear whether the incident was merely an illness, or if Caligula had been poisoned. Either way, following the incident, the young emperor began dealing with what he considered to be serious threats, by killing or exiling those who were close to him. During the remainder of his reign, he worked to increase the personal power of the emperor during his short reign, and devoted much of his attention to ambitious construction projects and luxurious dwellings for himself.

In 38 CE, Caligula focused his attention on political and public reform. He published the accounts of public funds, which had not been done under Tiberius's reign, provided aid to those who lost property in fires, and abolished certain taxes. He also allowed new members into the equestrian and senatorial orders. Perhaps most significantly, he restored the practice of democratic elections, which delighted much of the public but was a cause for concern among the aristocracy.

By 39 CE, a financial crisis had emerged as a result of Caligula's use of political payments,

which had overextended the state's treasury. In order to restock the treasury, Caligula began falsely accusing, fining, and even killing individuals in order to seize their estates. He also asked the public to lend the state money, and raised taxes on lawsuits, weddings, and prostitution, as well as auctioning the lives of gladiators at shows. Wills that left items to Tiberius were also reinterpreted as having left said items to Caligula. Centurions who had acquired property by plunder were also forced to turn over their spoils to the state, and highway commissioners were accused of incompetence and embezzlement and forced to

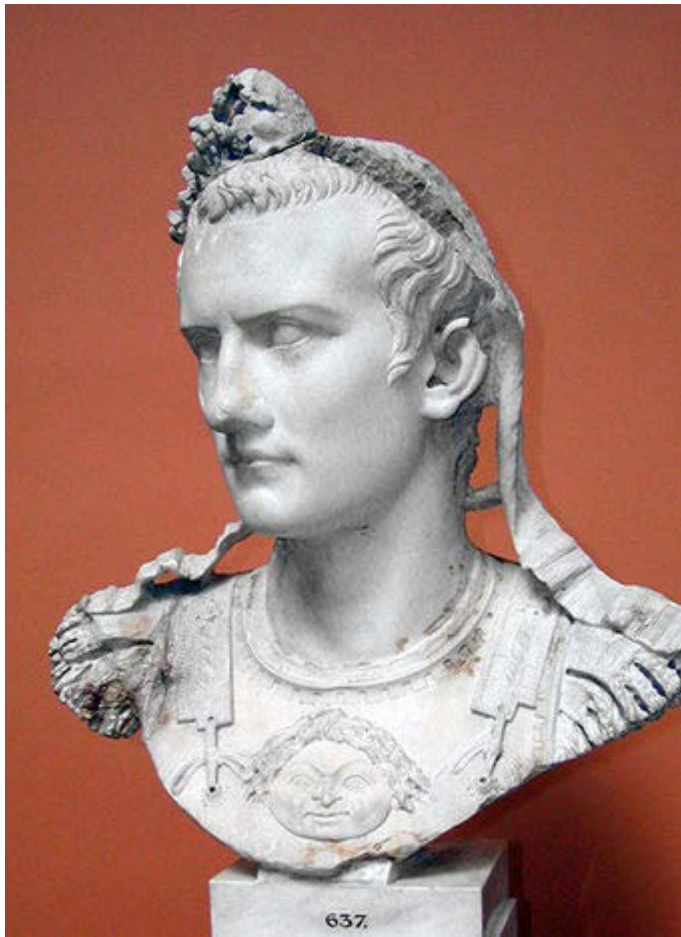


Figure 129 Emperor Caligula, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek. Bust of Caligula

repay money that they might not have taken in the first place. Around the same time, a brief famine occurred, possibly as a result of the financial crisis, though its causes remain unclear.

Despite financial difficulties, Caligula began a number of construction projects during this time. He initiated the construction of two aqueducts in Rome, Awua Claudia and Anio Novus, which were considered contemporary engineering marvels. In 39 CE, he ordered the construction of a temporary floating bridge between the resort of Baiae and the port of Puteoli, which rivaled the bridge Persian king Xerxes had constructed across the Hellespont.

Caligula had two large ships constructed for himself that were among the largest constructed in the ancient world. The larger of the two was essentially an elaborate floating palace with marble floors and plumbing. He also improved the harbors at Rhegium and Sicily, which allowed for increased grain imports from Egypt, possibly in response to the famine Rome experienced.

During his reign, the Empire annexed the Kingdom of Mauretania as a province.

Mauretania had previously been a client kingdom ruled by Ptolemy of Mauretania. Details

on how and why Mauretania was ultimately annexed remain unclear. Ptolemy was had been invited to Rome by Caligula and suddenly executed in what was seemingly a personal political move, rather than a calculated response to military or economic needs. However, Roman possession of Mauretania ultimately proved to be a boon to the territory, as the subsequent rebellion of Tacfarinas demonstrated how exposed the African Proconsularis was on its western borders. There also was a northern campaign to Britannia that was aborted during Caligula's reign, though there is not a cohesive narrative of the event.

In 39 CE, relations between Caligula and the Senate deteriorated. Caligula ordered a new set of treason investigations and trials, replacing the consul and putting a number of senators to death. Many other senators were reportedly treated in a degrading fashion and humiliated by Caligula. In 41 CE, Caligula was assassinated as part of a conspiracy by officers of the Praetorian Guard, senators, and courtiers. The conspirators used the assassination as an opportunity to re-institute the Republic, but were ultimately unsuccessful.

Claudius

Claudius, the fourth emperor of the Roman Empire, was the first Roman Emperor to be born outside of Italy. He was afflicted with a limp and slight deafness, which caused his family to ostracize him and exclude him from public office until he shared the consulship with his nephew, Caligula, in 37 CE. Due to Claudius's afflictions, it is likely he was spared from the many purges of Tiberius and Caligula's reigns. As a result, Claudius was declared Emperor by the Praetorian Guard after Caligula's assassination, due to his position as the last man in the Julio-Claudian line.



Figure 130 Bust of Emperor Claudius.

Despite his lack of experience, Claudius was an able and efficient administrator, as well as an ambitious builder; he constructed many roads, aqueducts, and canals across the Empire. His reign also saw the beginning of the conquest of Britain. Additionally, Claudius presided over many public trials, and issued up to 20 edicts a day. However, in spite of his capable rule, Claudius continued to be viewed as vulnerable by the Roman nobility throughout his reign, forcing Claudius to constantly defend his position. He did so by emphasizing his place within the Julio-Claudian family, dropping the cognomen, Nero, from his name, and replacing it with Caesar.

Nonetheless, his appointment as emperor by the Praetorian Guard caused damage to his reputation, and this was amplified when Claudius became the first emperor to resort to bribery as a means to secure army loyalty. Claudius also rewarded the Praetorian Guard that had named him emperor with 15,000 sesterces.

6.4.5: The Last Julio-Claudian Emperors

Nero's consolidation of personal power led to rebellion, civil war, and a year-long period of upheaval, during which four separate emperors ruled Rome.

Learning Objective

- Explain how Nero and other factors contributed to the fall of the Julio-Claudian Dynasty

Key Points

- Nero reigned as Roman Emperor from 54 to 68 CE, and was the last emperor in the Julio-Claudian Dynasty.
- Very early in Nero's rule, problems arose, due to his mother, Agrippina the Younger's competition for influence with Nero's two main advisers, Seneca and Burrus.
- Nero minimized the influence of all of his advisers and effectively eliminating all rivals to his throne. He also slowly removed power from the Senate, despite having promised to grant them with powers equivalent to those they had under republican rule.
- In March 68, Gaius Gullus Vindex, the governor of Gallia Lugdunensis, rebelled

against Nero's tax policies and called upon the support of Servius Sulpicius Galba, the governor of Hispania Tarraconensis, who not only joined the rebellion, but also declared himself emperor in opposition to Nero. Galba would become the first emperor in what was known as the Year of the Four Emperors.

- Vespasian was the fourth and final emperor to rule in the year 69 CE, and established the stable Flavian Dynasty, that was to succeed the Julio-Claudians.

Key Terms

- **Praetorian Guard** – A force of bodyguards used by the Roman emperors. They also served as secret police and participated in wars.
- **Julio-Claudian dynasty** – The first five Roman emperors who ruled the Roman Empire, including Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, and Nero.
- **Flavian dynasty** – A Roman imperial dynasty that ruled the Roman Empire from 69 to 96 CE, encompassing the reigns of Vespasian and his two sons, Titus and Domitian.

Nero

Nero reigned as Roman Emperor from 54 to 68 CE, and was the last emperor in the Julio-Claudian Dynasty. Nero focused on diplomacy, trade, and enhancing the cultural life of the Empire during his rule. He ordered theaters to be built and promoted athletic games. However, according to Tacitus, a historian writing one generation after Nero's rule, Nero was viewed by many Romans as compulsive and corrupt. Suetonius, another historian writing a generation after Nero's rule, claims that Nero began the Great Fire of Rome in 64 CE, in order to clear land for a palatial complex he was planning.

Early Rule

When Claudius died in 54, Nero was established as the new emperor. According to some ancient historians, Agrippina the Younger, Nero's mother, poisoned Claudius in order to make Nero the youngest Roman emperor (at the age of 17). Very early in Nero's rule, problems arose due to Agrippina's competition for influence with Nero's two main advisers, Seneca and Burrus. For example, in the year 54, Agrippina caused a scandal by attempting to sit with Nero while he met with the Armenian envoy, an unheard of act, since women were not permitted to be in the same room as men while official business was

being conducted. The next year, Agrippina attempted to intervene on behalf of Nero's wife, Octavia, with whom Nero was dissatisfied and cheating on with a former slave. With the help of his adviser, Seneca, Nero managed to resist his mother's interference yet again.

Sensing his resistance to her influence, Agrippina began pushing for Britannicus, Nero's stepbrother, to become emperor. Britannicus was still shy of 14 years old, and legally still a minor, but because he was the son of the previous emperor, Claudius, by blood, Agrippina held hope that he would be accepted as the true heir to the throne. Her efforts were thwarted, however, when Britannicus mysteriously died one day short of becoming a legal adult. Many ancient historians claim that Britannicus was poisoned by his stepbrother, Nero. Shortly thereafter, Agrippina was ordered out of the imperial residence.



Figure 131 A marble bust of Nero, at the Antiquarium of the Palatine.

Consolidation of Power

Over time, Nero began minimizing the influence of all advisers and effectively eliminating all rivals to his throne. Even Seneca and Burrus were accused of conspiring against, and embezzling from the emperor; they were eventually acquitted, reducing their roles from careful management of the government to mere moderation of Nero's actions on the throne. In 58 CE, Nero became romantically involved with Poppaea Sabina, the wife of his friend and future emperor, Otho. Because divorcing his current wife and marrying Poppaea did not seem politically feasible with his mother still alive, Nero ordered Agrippina's murder the following year.

Nero's consolidation of power included a slow usurpation of authority from the Senate. Although he had promised the Senate powers equivalent to those it had under republican

rule, over the course of the first decade of Nero's rule, the Senate was divested of all its authority, which led directly to the Pisonian Conspiracy of 65. Gaius Calpurnius Piso, a Roman statesman, organized the conspiracy against Nero with the help of Subrius Flavus, a tribune, and Sulpicius Asper, a centurion of the Praetorian Guard, in order to restore the Republic and wrest power from the emperor. However, the conspiracy failed when it was discovered by a freedman, who reported the details to Nero's secretary. This led to the execution of all conspirators. Seneca was also ordered to commit suicide after he admitted to having prior knowledge of the plot.

Vindex and Galba's Revolt

In March 68, Gaius Julius Vindex, the governor of Gallia Lugdunensis, rebelled against Nero's tax policies and called upon the support of Servius Sulpicius Galba, the governor of Hispania Tarraconensis, who not only joined the rebellion, but also declared himself emperor in opposition to Nero. Two months later, Vindex's forces were defeated at the Battle of Vesontio, and Vindex committed suicide. The legions that defeated Vindex then attempted to proclaim their own commander, Verginius, as emperor, but Verginius refused to act against Nero. Meanwhile, public support for Galba grew despite his being officially declared a public enemy. In response, Nero began to flee Rome only to turn back when the army officers that were with him refused to obey his commands. When Nero returned, he received word that the Senate had declared him a public enemy and intended to beat him to death—although in actuality, the Senate remained open to mediating an end to the conflict, and many senators felt a sense of loyalty to Nero, even if only on account of him being the last of the Julio-Claudian line. However, Nero was unaware of this and convinced his private secretary to help him take his own life.

Year of the Four Emperors

The suicide of Emperor Nero was followed by a brief period of civil war. Then, between June 68 and December 69, four emperors ruled in succession: Galba, Otho, Vitellius, and Vespasian.

Galba was recognized as emperor following Nero's suicide, but he did not remain popular for long. On his march to Rome, he either destroyed or took enormous fines from towns that did not accept him immediately. Once in Rome, Galba made many of Nero's reforms

redundant, including ones that benefited important people within Roman society. Galba executed many senators and equites without trial, in a paranoid attempt to consolidate his power, which unsettled many, including the Praetorian Guard. Finally, the legions of Germania Inferior refused to swear allegiance and obedience to Galba, instead proclaiming the governor Vitellius as emperor.

This caused Galba to panic and name Lucius Calpurnius Piso Licinianus, a young senator, as his successor. This upset many people, but especially Marcus Salvius Otho, who had coveted after the title for himself. Otho bribed the Praetorian Guard to support him and

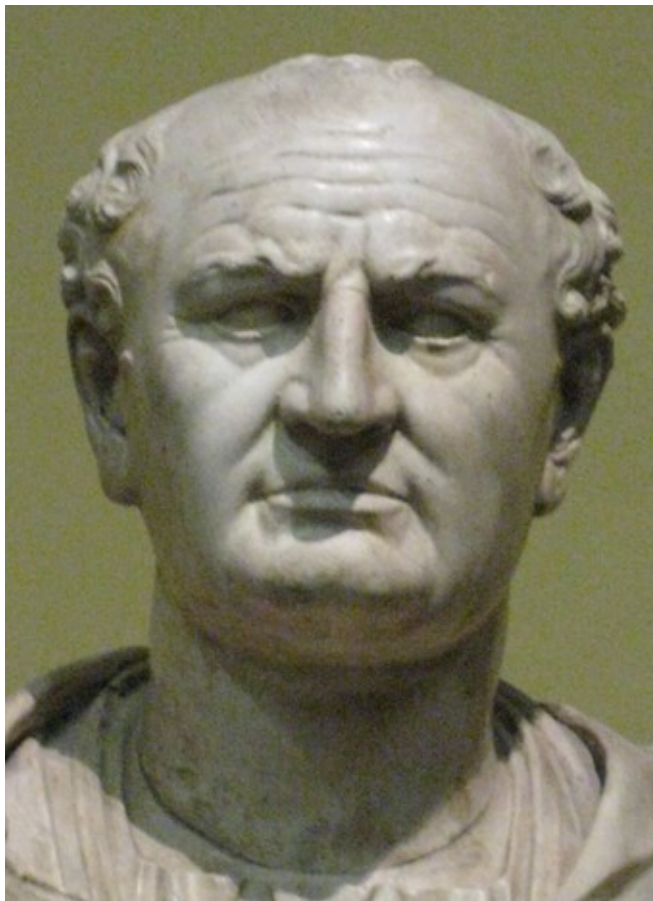


Figure 132 A plaster cast of Vespasian in the Pushkin Museum, after an original held in the Louvre.

embarked upon a coup d'état, during which Galba was killed by the Praetorians. Otho was recognized as emperor by the Senate the same day and was expected by many to be a fair ruler. Unfortunately, soon thereafter, Vitellius declared himself Emperor in Germania, and dispatched half his army to march on Italy.

Otho attempted to broker a peace, but Vitellius was uninterested, especially because his legions were some of the finest in the empire, which gave him a great advantage over Otho. Indeed, Otho was eventually defeated at the Battle of Bedriacum, and rather than flee and attempt a counterattack, Otho committed suicide. He had been emperor for little more than three months. Vitellius was

recognized as emperor by the Senate. Very quickly thereafter, he proceeded to bankrupt the imperial treasury by throwing a series of feasts, banquets, and triumphal parades. He tortured and executed money lenders who demanded payment and killed any citizens who named him as their heir. He also lured many political rivals to his palace in order to assassinate them.

Meanwhile, many of the legions in the African province of Egypt, and the Middle East provinces of Iudaea and Syria, including the governor of Syria, acclaimed Vespasian as their emperor. A force marched from the Middle East to Rome, and Vespasian traveled to Alexandria, where he was officially named Emperor. From there, Vespasian invaded Italy and won a crushing victory over Vitellius's army at the Second Battle of Bedriacum. Vitellius was found by Vespasian's men at the imperial palace and put to death. The Senate acknowledged Vespasian as emperor the next day, marking the beginning of the Flavian Dynasty, which was to succeed the Julio-Claudian line. Vespasian remained emperor for the rest of his natural life.

Attributions

- Julius Caesar
 - "Pompey." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pompey>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Julius Caesar." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julius_Caesar. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Gaius Julius Caesar (100-44 BC)." [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julius_Caesar%23mediaviewer/File:Gaius_Julius_Caesar_\(100-44_BC\).JPG](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julius_Caesar%23mediaviewer/File:Gaius_Julius_Caesar_(100-44_BC).JPG). Wikipedia Public domain.
- Founding of the Roman Empire
 - "Mark Antony." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Antony. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Augustus." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustus>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Statue-Augustus." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustus%23mediaviewer/File:Statue-Augustus.jpg>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- The Pax Romana
 - "Constitutional reforms of Augustus." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitutional_reforms_of_Augustus. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Pax Romana." http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Pax_Romana. Wiktionary CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Ara Pacis." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ara_Pacis. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.

- "Ara Pacis Panel Tellus Mater."
<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:AraPacisReliefTellusMater.JPG>.
 Wikimedia Commons GNU FDL.
- The Julio-Claudian Emperors
 - "Caligula." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caligula>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Tiberius." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tiberius>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Praetorian Guard." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Praetorian_Guard.
 Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Julio-Claudian Dynasty." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julio-Claudian_dynasty. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Claudius." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claudius>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Tiberius,_Romisch-Germanisches_Museum,_Cologne_(8115606671).jpg."
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tiberius,_Romisch-Germanisches_Museum,_Cologne_\(8115606671\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tiberius,_Romisch-Germanisches_Museum,_Cologne_(8115606671).jpg).
 Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "454px-Claudius_crop.jpg."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Claudius_crop.jpg.
 Wikimedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "438px-Gaius_Caesar_Caligula.jpg."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gaius_Caesar_Caligula.jpg.
 Wikimedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- The Last Julio-Claudian Emperors
 - "Year of the Four Emperors."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Year_of_the_Four_Emperors. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Nero." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nero>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Flavian dynasty." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flavian_dynasty. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Vespasianus02_pushkin.jpg."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vespasianus02_pushkin.jpg.
 Wikimedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Nero_Palatino_Inv618.jpg."

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nero_Palatino_Inv618.jpg.

Wikimedia Public domain.



6.5: The Flavian Dynasty

6.5.1: The Flavian Dynasty

The Flavian Dynasty, which began under the rule of Vespasian during the Year of the Four Emperors, is known for several significant historic, economic, and military events.

Learning Objective

- Analyze how Vespasian consolidated control over the empire

Key Points

- Vespasian, a general for the Roman army, founded the Flavian Dynasty, which ruled the Empire for 27 years.
- While Vespasian besieged Jerusalem during the Jewish rebellion, Emperor Nero committed suicide and plunged Rome into a year of civil war, known as the Year of the Four Emperors.
- After Galba and Otho perished in quick succession, Vitellius became the third emperor in April 69 CE.
- The Roman legions of Roman Egypt and Judaea reacted by declaring Vespasian, their commander, emperor on July 1, 69 CE.
- In his bid for imperial power, Vespasian joined forces with Mucianus, the governor of Syria, and Primus, a general in Pannonia, leaving his son, Titus, to command the besieging forces at Jerusalem; Primus and Mucianus led the Flavian forces against Vitellius, while Vespasian took control of Egypt.
- On December 20, 69, Vitellius was defeated, and the following day, Vespasian was declared Emperor by the Senate.
- Little information survives about the government during Vespasian's ten-year rule; he reformed the financial system at Rome after the campaign against Judaea ended successfully, and initiated several ambitious construction projects.

Key Terms

- **Colosseum** – Also known as the Flavian Amphitheater, an oval amphitheater in the center of the city of Rome, Italy, built of concrete and sand. The largest amphitheater ever built, used for gladiatorial contests and public spectacles, such

as mock sea battles, animal hunts, executions, re-enactments of famous battles, and dramas based on Classical mythology.

- **Year of the Four Emperors** – A year in the history of the Roman Empire, 69 CE, in which four emperors ruled in succession: Galba, Otho, Vitellius, and Vespasian.
- **Praetorian Guard** – A force of bodyguards used by Roman Emperors, who also served as secret police and participated in wars.

Overview

The Flavian Dynasty was a Roman imperial dynasty that ruled the Roman Empire between 69 CE and 96 CE, encompassing the reigns of Vespasian (69-79 CE), and his two sons Titus (79-81 CE) and Domitian (81-96 CE). The Flavians rose to power during the civil war of 69, known as the Year of the Four Emperors. After Galba and Otho died in quick succession, Vitellius became emperor in mid-69 CE. His claim to the throne was quickly challenged by legions stationed in the Eastern provinces, who declared their commander, Vespasian, emperor in his place. The Second Battle of Bedriacum tilted the balance decisively in favor of the Flavian forces, who entered Rome on December 20. The following day, the Roman Senate officially declared Vespasian emperor of the Roman Empire, thus commencing the Flavian Dynasty. Although the dynasty proved to be short-lived, several significant historic, economic, and military events took place during their reign.

The Flavians initiated economic and cultural reforms. Under Vespasian, new taxes were devised to restore the Empire's finances, while Domitian revalued the Roman coinage by increasing its silver content. A massive building program was enacted to celebrate the ascent of the Flavian Dynasty, leaving multiple enduring landmarks in the city of Rome, the most spectacular of which was the Flavian Amphitheater, better known as the Colosseum.

Rise to Power

On June 9, 68 CE, amidst growing opposition of the Senate and the army, Nero committed suicide, and with him the Julio-Claudian Dynasty came to an end. Chaos ensued, leading to a year of brutal civil war, known as the Year of the Four Emperors, during which the four most influential generals in the Roman Empire—Galba, Otho, Vitellius and Vespasian—successively vied for imperial power. News of Nero's death reached Vespasian as he was

preparing to besiege the city of Jerusalem. Almost simultaneously the Senate had declared Galba, then governor of Hispania Tarraconensis (modern Spain), as Emperor of Rome. Rather than continue his campaign, Vespasian decided to await further orders and send Titus to greet the new Emperor. Before reaching Italy however, Titus learned that Galba had been murdered and replaced by Otho, the governor of Lusitania (modern Portugal). At the same time, Vitellius and his armies in Germania had risen in revolt, and prepared to march on Rome, intent on overthrowing Otho. Not wanting to risk being taken hostage by one side or the other, Titus abandoned the journey to Rome and rejoined his father in Judaea.



Figure 133 The Roman Empire during the Year of the Four Emperors (69 CE). Purple areas indicate provinces loyal to Vespasian and Gaius Licinius Mucianus. Green areas indicate provinces loyal to Vitellius.

The map shows that Dalmatia (one of four historical regions of Croatia), Pannonia (an ancient province of the Roman Empire bounded north and east by the Danube, coterminous westward with Noricum and upper Italy, and southward with Dalmatia and upper Moesia), Moesia (an ancient region and later Roman province situated in the Balkans, along the south bank of the Danube River), Aegyptus (the Roman province of Egypt), Iudaea (an area that incorporated the regions of Judea,

Samaria, and Idumea, and extended over parts of the former regions of the Hasmonean and Herodian kingdoms of Israel), and Syria were loyal to Vespasian.

Otho and Vitellius realized the potential threat posed by the Flavian faction. With four legions at his disposal, Vespasian commanded a strength of nearly 80,000 soldiers. His position in Judaea further granted him the advantage of being nearest to the vital province of Egypt, which controlled the grain supply to Rome. His brother, Titus Flavius Sabinus II, as city prefect, commanded the entire city garrison of Rome. Tensions among the Flavian troops ran high, but as long as Galba and Otho remained in power, Vespasian refused to take action. When Otho was defeated by Vitellius at the First Battle of Bedriacum however, the armies in Judaea and Egypt took matters into their own hands, and declared

Vespasian emperor on July 1, 69. Vespasian accepted, and entered an alliance with Gaius Licinius Mucianus, the governor of Syria, against Vitellius. A strong force drawn from the Judaeen and Syrian legions marched on Rome under the command of Mucianus, while Vespasian himself travelled to Alexandria, leaving Titus in charge of ending the Jewish rebellion.

Meanwhile in Rome, Domitian was placed under house arrest by Vitellius, as a safeguard against future Flavian aggression. Support for the old emperor was waning however, as more legions throughout the empire pledged their allegiance to Vespasian. On October 24, 69, the forces of Vitellius and Vespasian clashed at the Second Battle of Bedriacum, which ended in a crushing defeat for the armies of Vitellius. In despair, he attempted to negotiate a surrender. Terms of peace, including a voluntary abdication, were agreed upon with Titus Flavius Sabinus II, but the soldiers of the Praetorian Guard—the imperial bodyguard—considered such a resignation disgraceful, and prevented Vitellius from carrying out the treaty. After several skirmishes between the factions, eventually Vitellius was killed and on December 21, the Senate proclaimed Vespasian emperor of the Roman Empire.

Although the war had officially ended, a state of anarchy and lawlessness pervaded in the first days following the demise of Vitellius. In early 70 AD, order was properly restored by Mucianus, who headed an interim government with Domitian as the representative of the Flavian family in the Senate. Upon receiving the tidings of his rival's defeat and death at Alexandria, the new Emperor at once forwarded supplies of urgently needed grain to Rome, along with an edict or a declaration of policy, in which he gave assurance of an entire reversal of the laws of Nero, especially those relating to treason. However, in early 70, Vespasian was still in Egypt, continuing to consolidate support from the Egyptians before departing. By the end of the year, he finally returned to Rome, and was properly installed as Emperor.

Vespasian's Rule

Little factual information survives about Vespasian's government during the ten years he was Emperor. Vespasian spent his first year as a ruler in Egypt, during which the administration of the empire was given to Mucianus, aided by Vespasian's son, Domitian.

Modern historians believe that Vespasian remained there, in order to consolidate support from the Egyptians. In mid-70, Vespasian first came to Rome and immediately embarked on a widespread propaganda campaign to consolidate his power and promote the new dynasty. His reign is best known for financial reforms following the demise of the Julio-Claudian Dynasty, such as the institution of the tax on urinals, and the numerous military campaigns fought during the 70s. The most significant of these was the First Jewish-Roman War, which ended in the destruction of the city of Jerusalem by Titus. In addition, Vespasian faced several uprisings in Egypt, Gaul, and Germania, and reportedly survived several conspiracies against him.

Vespasian helped rebuild Rome after the civil war, adding a temple of peace, and beginning construction of the Flavian Amphitheater, better known as the Colosseum.

Many modern historians note the increased amount of propaganda that appeared during Vespasian's reign. Stories of a supernatural emperor, who was destined to rule, circulated in the empire. Nearly one-third of all coins minted in Rome under Vespasian celebrated military victory or peace. The word *vindex* was removed from coins so as not to remind the public of rebellious Vindex.

Construction projects bore inscriptions praising Vespasian and condemning previous emperors. A temple of peace was constructed in the forum as well. Vespasian approved histories written under his reign, ensuring biases against him were removed.



Figure 134 Bust of Vespasian

Vespasian also gave financial rewards to writers. The ancient historians who lived through the period, such as Tacitus, Suetonius, Josephus, and Pliny the Elder, speak suspiciously well of Vespasian, while condemning the emperors who came before him. Tacitus admits

that his status was elevated by Vespasian, Josephus identifies Vespasian as a patron and savior, and Pliny dedicated his Natural Histories to Vespasian's son, Titus.

Those who spoke against Vespasian were punished. A number of stoic philosophers were accused of corrupting students with inappropriate teachings and were expelled from Rome. Helvidius Priscus, a pro- republic philosopher, was executed for his teachings.

Vespasian died of natural causes on June 23, 79, and was immediately succeeded by his eldest son, Titus.

6.5.2: Military Achievements of the Flavians

The Flavian Dynasty's military witnessed the siege and destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 CE, and substantial conquests in Great Britain under command of Gnaeus Julius Agricola between 77 and 83 CE.

Learning Objective

- Describe some of the military achievements and challenges of the Flavian emperors

Key Points

- The most significant military campaign undertaken during the Flavian period was the siege and destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE by Titus; it was a response to a failed Jewish rebellion in 66.
- Contemporary estimates claimed that 1,100,000 people were killed during the siege, of which a majority were Jewish.
- Substantial conquests were made in Great Britain under command of Gnaeus Julius Agricola, between 77 and 83.
- The military campaigns undertaken during Domitian's reign were usually defensive in nature, as the Emperor rejected the idea of expansionist warfare, and the few battles were mainly fought with Germanic tribes, especially the Dacians.

Key Terms

- **Limes Germanicus** – A line of frontier fortifications that bounded the ancient Roman provinces of Germania Inferior, Germania Superior and Raetia, dividing the Roman Empire and the unsubdued Germanic tribes, from the years 83 to about 260

CE.

- **Torah** – The central text of the religious Judaic tradition, often referring specifically to the first five books of the twenty-four books of the Tanakh.
- **The Forum** – A rectangular forum (plaza) surrounded by the ruins of several important ancient government buildings at the center of the city of Rome, originally a large marketplace.

Overview

The Flavian Dynasty's military witnessed the siege and destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 CE, following the failed Jewish rebellion of 66. Substantial conquests were made in Great Britain under command of Gnaeus Julius Agricola between 77 and 83, while Domitian was unable to procure a decisive victory against King Decebalus in the war against the Dacians. In addition, the Empire strengthened its border defenses by expanding the fortifications along the Limes Germanicus.

Siege of Jerusalem

The most significant military campaign undertaken during the Flavian period was the siege and destruction of Jerusalem in 70 by Titus. The destruction of the city was the culmination of the Roman campaign in Judaea following the Jewish uprising of 66. The Second



Figure 135 This relief from the Arch of Titus depicts Roman soldiers carrying treasures from the Temple of Jerusalem, including the Menorah. The city was besieged and destroyed by Titus in 70 CE.

Temple was completely demolished, after which Titus's soldiers proclaimed him emperor, an honorific meaning "commander," in honor of the victory.

Jerusalem was sacked and much of the population killed or dispersed. Josephus claims that 1,100,000 people were killed during the siege, of which a majority were Jewish. 97,000 were captured and

enslaved, including Simon Bar Giora and John of Gischala. Many fled to areas around the Mediterranean.

Titus reportedly refused to accept a wreath of victory, as there is "no merit in vanquishing people forsaken by their own God." Upon his return to Rome in 71, Titus was awarded a

triumph. Accompanied by Vespasian and Domitian, he rode into the city, enthusiastically saluted by the Roman populace, and preceded by a lavish parade containing treasures and captives from the war. Josephus describes a procession with large amounts of gold and silver carried along the route, followed by elaborate re-enactments of the war, Jewish prisoners, and finally the treasures taken from the Temple of Jerusalem, including the Menorah and the Torah. Leaders of the resistance were executed in the Forum, after which the procession closed with religious sacrifices at the Temple of Jupiter. The triumphal Arch of Titus, which stands at one entrance to the Forum, memorializes the victory of Titus.

Conquest of Britain

The conquest of Britain continued under command of Gnaeus Julius Agricola, who expanded the Roman Empire as far as Caledonia, or modern day Scotland, between 77 and 84 AD. In 82, Agricola crossed an unidentified body of water and defeated peoples unknown to the Romans until then. He fortified the coast facing Ireland, and Tacitus recalled that his father-in-law often claimed the island could be conquered with a single legion and a few auxiliaries. He had given refuge to an exiled Irish king whom he hoped he might use as the excuse for conquest. This conquest never happened, but some historians believe that the crossing referred to was in fact a small-scale exploratory or punitive expedition to Ireland. The following year, Agricola raised a fleet and pushed beyond the Forth into Caledonia. To aid the advance, an expansive legionary fortress was constructed at Inchtuthil. In the summer of 84, Agricola faced the armies of the Caledonians, led by Calgacus, at the Battle of Mons Graupius. Although the Romans inflicted heavy losses on the Calidonians, two-thirds of their army managed to escape and hide in the Scottish marshes and Highlands, ultimately preventing Agricola from bringing the entire British island under his control.

Other Military Activity

The military campaigns undertaken during Domitian's reign were usually defensive in nature, as the Emperor rejected the idea of expansionist warfare. His most significant military contribution was the development of the Limes Germanicus, which encompassed a vast network of roads, forts, and watchtowers constructed along the Rhine River to defend the Empire from the unsubdued Germanic tribes. Nevertheless, several important

wars were fought in Gaul, against the Chatti, and across the Danube frontier against the Suebi, the Sarmatians, and the Dacians. Led by King Decebalus, the Dacians invaded the province of Moesia around 84 or 85, wreaking considerable havoc and killing the Moesian governor Oppius Sabinus. Domitian immediately launched a counteroffensive, which resulted in the destruction of a legion during an ill-fated expedition into Dacia. Their commander, Cornelius Fuscus, was killed, and the battle standard of the Praetorian Guard lost.

In 87, the Romans invaded Dacia once more, this time under command of Tettius Julianus, and finally managed to defeat Decebalus late in 88, at the same site where Fuscus had previously been killed. An attack on Dacia's capital was cancelled, however, when a crisis arose on the German frontier. This forced Domitian to sign a peace treaty with Decebalus that was severely criticized by contemporary authors. For the remainder of Domitian's reign, Dacia remained a relatively peaceful client kingdom, but Decebalus used the Roman money to fortify his defenses, and continued to defy Rome. It was not until the reign of Trajan, in 106, that a decisive victory against Decebalus was procured. Again, the Roman army sustained heavy losses, but Trajan succeeded in capturing Sarmizegetusa and, importantly, annexed the gold and silver mines of Dacia.

6.5.3: Eruptions of Vesuvius and Pompeii

The eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE was one of the most catastrophic volcanic eruptions in European history, with several Roman settlements obliterated and buried, and thereby preserved, under ash.

Learning Objective

- Describe the events surrounding the Eruption of Mount Vesuvius

Key Points

- The eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE, during the reign of Emperor Titus, was one of the most catastrophic volcanic eruptions in European history.
- Historians have learned about the eruption from the eyewitness account of Pliny the Younger, a Roman administrator and poet.
- Mount Vesuvius spewed a deadly cloud of volcanic gas, stones, and ash to a height

of 21 miles, ejecting molten rock and pulverized pumice at the rate of 1.5 million tons per second, ultimately releasing a hundred thousand times the thermal energy of the Hiroshima bombing.

- Several Roman settlements were obliterated and buried underneath massive pyroclastic surges and ashfall deposits, the most well-known of which are Pompeii and Herculaneum.
- The preserved remains of about 1,500 people have been found at Pompeii and Herculaneum, but the overall death toll is still unknown.

Key Terms

- **Pliny the Younger** – A lawyer, author, and magistrate of Ancient Rome who witnessed the eruption of Mount Vesuvius.
- **Pyroclastic surge** – A fluidized mass of turbulent gas and rock fragments, ejected during some volcanic eruptions.
- **Pompeii** – An ancient Roman town-city near modern Naples, in the Campania region of Italy, destroyed during the eruption of Mount Vesuvius.

Overview

Although his administration was marked by a relative absence of major military or political conflicts, Titus faced a number of major disasters during his brief reign. On August 24, 79 CE, barely two months after his accession, Mount Vesuvius erupted, resulting in the almost complete destruction of life and property in the cities and resort communities around the Bay of Naples. The cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum were buried under meters of stone and lava, killing thousands of citizens. Titus appointed two ex-consuls to organize and coordinate the relief effort, while personally donating large amounts of money from the imperial treasury to aid the victims of the volcano. Additionally, he visited Pompeii once after the eruption and again the following year.

The city was lost for nearly 1,700 years before its accidental rediscovery in 1748. Since then, its excavation has provided an extraordinarily detailed insight into the life of a city at the height of the Roman Empire, frozen at the moment it was buried on August 24, 79. The Forum, the baths, many houses, and some out-of-town villas, like the Villa of the Mysteries, remain surprisingly well preserved. Today, it is one of the most popular tourist

attractions of Italy and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. On-going excavations reveal new insights into the Roman history and culture.

The Eruption

Reconstructions of the eruption and its effects vary considerably in the details but have the same overall features. The eruption lasted for two days. The morning of the first day, August 24, was perceived as normal by the only eyewitness to leave a surviving document, Pliny the Younger, who at that point was staying at Misenum, on the other side of the Bay of Naples, about 19 miles from the volcano, which may have prevented him from noticing the early signs of the eruption. He was not to have any opportunity, during the next two days, to talk to people who had witnessed the eruption from Pompeii or Herculaneum (indeed he never mentions Pompeii in his letter), so he would not have noticed early, smaller fissures and releases of ash and smoke on the mountain, if such had occurred earlier in the morning.

Around 1:00 p.m., Mount Vesuvius violently exploded, throwing up a high-altitude column from which ash began to fall, blanketing the area. Rescues and escapes occurred during this time. At some time in the night or early the next day, August 25, pyroclastic flows in the close vicinity of the volcano began. Lights seen on the mountain were interpreted as fires. People as far away as Misenum fled for their lives. The flows were rapid-moving, dense, and very hot, knocking down wholly or partly all structures in their path, incinerating or suffocating all population remaining there and altering the landscape, including the coastline. These were accompanied by additional light tremors and a mild tsunami in the Bay of Naples. By evening of the second day the eruption was over, leaving only haze in the atmosphere, through which the sun shone weakly.

Pliny the Younger wrote an account of the eruption:

Broad sheets of flame were lighting up many parts of Vesuvius; their light and brightness were the more vivid for the darkness of the night... it was daylight now elsewhere in the world, but there the darkness was darker and thicker than any night.

Casualties

In Pompeii, the eruption destroyed the city, killing its inhabitants and burying it under tons of ash. Evidence for the destruction originally came from a surviving letter by Pliny the Younger, who saw the eruption from a distance and described the death of his uncle, Pliny the Elder, an admiral of the Roman fleet, who tried to rescue citizens. The site was lost for about 1,500 years until its initial rediscovery in 1599, and broader rediscovery almost 150 years later by Spanish engineer Rocque Joaquin de Alcubierre in 1748. The objects that lay beneath the city have been preserved for centuries because of the lack of air and



Figure 136 Plaster casts of victims still in situ; many casts are in the Archaeological Museum of Naples.

moisture. These artifacts provide an extraordinarily detailed insight into the life of a city during the Pax Romana. During the excavation, plaster was used to fill in the voids in the ash layers that once held human bodies. This allowed archaeologists to see the exact position the person was in when he or she died.

By 2003, around 1,044 casts made from impressions of bodies in the ash deposits had been recovered in and around Pompeii, with the scattered bones of another 100. The remains of about 332 bodies have been found at Herculaneum (300 in arched vaults discovered in 1980). The percentage these numbers represent of the total dead, or the percentage of the dead to the total number at risk, remain completely unknown.

Thirty-eight percent of the 1,044 were found in the ash fall deposits, the majority inside buildings. These are thought to have been killed mainly by roof collapses, with the smaller number of victims found outside buildings probably killed by falling roof slates, or by larger rocks thrown out by the volcano. This differs from modern experience, since over the last four hundred years only around 4% of victims have been killed by ash falls during

explosive eruptions. The remaining 62% of remains found at Pompeii were in the pyroclastic surge deposits, and thus were probably killed by them. It was initially believed that due to the state of the bodies found at Pompeii, and the outline of clothes on the bodies, it was unlikely that high temperatures were a significant cause. But in 2010, studies indicated that during the fourth pyroclastic surge—the first surge to reach Pompeii—temperatures reached 572 °F. Volcanologist Giuseppe Mastrolorenzo, who led the study, noted that "[The temperature was] enough to kill hundreds of people in a fraction of a second." In reference as to why the bodies were frozen in suspended action, he said, "The contorted postures are not the effects of a long agony, but of the cadaveric spasm, a consequence of heat shock on corpses."



Figure 137 Ring Lady

To the right, the skeletal remains of a young woman killed by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE. The skeleton, unearthed from the ruins of Herculaneum in 1982, was named the "Ring Lady" because of the emerald and ruby rings found on the woman's left hand. Two gold bracelets and gold earrings were also found by the woman's side.

6.5.4: Flavian Architecture

Under the Flavian Dynasty, a massive building program was undertaken, leaving multiple enduring landmarks in the city of Rome, the most spectacular of which was the Flavian Amphitheater, better known as the Colosseum.

Learning Objective

- Identify some of the key structures erected by the Flavian emperors

Key Points

- Perhaps the most enduring legacy of the Flavian Dynasty was their massive building program, which not only erected new buildings to celebrate their successes, but also renovated buildings, statues, and monuments throughout Rome.
- The most spectacular of these buildings was the Flavian Amphitheater, better known as the Colosseum, built from the spoils of the Siege of Jerusalem.
- The Colosseum was used for gladiatorial contests and public spectacles, such as mock sea battles, animal hunts, executions, re-enactments of famous battles, and dramas based on Classical mythology.
- The bulk of the Flavian construction projects was carried out during the reign of Domitian, who spent lavishly to restore and embellish the city of Rome.

Key Terms

- **Apollo** – One of the most important and complex of the Olympian deities, variously recognized as a god of music, truth and prophecy, healing, the sun and light, plague, poetry, and more.
- **Flavian Amphitheatre** – Better known as the Colosseum, an oval amphitheater in the center of the city of Rome, Italy; used for gladiatorial games, among other activities.

Overview

The Flavian Dynasty is perhaps best known for its vast construction program on the city of Rome, intended to restore the capital from the damage it had suffered during the Great Fire of 64, and the civil war of 69. Vespasian added the temple of Peace and the temple to the deified Claudius. In 75, a colossal statue of Apollo, begun under Nero as a statue of himself, was finished on Vespasian's orders, and he also dedicated a stage of the theater of Marcellus. Construction of the Flavian Amphitheater, presently better known as the Colosseum (probably after the nearby statue), was begun in 70 CE under Vespasian, and finally completed in 80 under Titus. In addition to providing spectacular entertainments to the Roman populace, the building was also conceived as a gigantic triumphal monument to commemorate the military achievements of the Flavians during the Jewish wars.

Adjacent to the amphitheater, within the precinct of Nero's Golden House, Titus also

ordered the construction of a new public bath-house, which was to bear his name. Construction of this building was hastily finished to coincide with the completion of the Flavian Amphitheater.

The bulk of the Flavian construction projects was carried out during the reign of Domitian, who spent lavishly to restore and embellish the city of Rome. Much more than a renovation project however, Domitian's building program was intended to be the crowning achievement of an Empire-wide cultural renaissance. Around 50 structures were erected, restored, or completed, a number second only to the amount erected under Augustus. Among the most important new structures were an odeum, a stadium, and an expansive palace on the Palatine Hill, known as the Flavian Palace, which was designed by Domitian's master architect, Rabirius. The most important building Domitian restored was the Temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline Hill, which was said to have been covered with a gilded roof. Among those he completed were the Temple of Vespasian and Titus, the Arch of Titus, and the Colosseum, to which he added a fourth level and finished the interior seating area.

The Colosseum

The Colosseum is an oval amphitheater in the center of the city of Rome, Italy. Built of concrete and sand, it is the largest amphitheater ever built. The Colosseum is situated just east of the Roman Forum. Construction began under the emperor Vespasian in 72 CE,



Figure 138 A photo of the Colosseum as it stands today, lit up at dusk.

and was completed in 80 CE under his successor and heir, Titus. Further modifications were made during the reign of Domitian (81-96).

The Colosseum could hold, it is estimated, between 50,000 and 80,000 spectators, with an average audience of some 65,000; it was used for gladiatorial contests and public spectacles, such as mock sea

battles (for only a short time, as the hypogeum was soon filled in with mechanisms to support the other activities), animal hunts, executions, re-enactments of famous battles,

and dramas based on Classical mythology.

Construction was funded by the opulent spoils taken from the Jewish Temple after the Great Jewish Revolt in 70 CE led to the Siege of Jerusalem. According to a reconstructed inscription found on the site, "the emperor Vespasian ordered this new amphitheater to be erected from his general's share of the booty." Along with the spoils, estimated 100,000 Jewish prisoners were brought back to Rome after the war, and many contributed to the massive workforce needed for construction. The slaves undertook manual labor, such as working in the quarries at Tivoli where the travertine was quarried, along with lifting and transporting the quarried stones 20 miles from Tivoli to Rome. Along with this free source of unskilled labor, teams of professional Roman builders, engineers, artists, painters and decorators undertook the more specialized tasks necessary for building the Colosseum.

6.5.5: Fall of the Flavian Emperors

Domitian, the last of the Flavian emperors, was a ruthless autocrat who had many enemies, some of whom eventually assassinated him, giving rise to the long-lived Nerva-Antoine Dynasty.

Learning Objective

- Analyze the factors that led to the fall of the Flavian Dynasty

Key Points

- Flavian rule came to an end on September 18, 96, when Domitian was assassinated and was succeeded by the longtime Flavian supporter and advisor Marcus Cocceius Nerva, who founded the long-lived Nerva-Antoine Dynasty.
- Domitian's government exhibited totalitarian characteristics, which caused disapproval of the Roman Senate, among others.
- He dealt with several revolts during his rule, the last one being a successful assassination.
- The Senate rejoiced at the death of Domitian, and immediately following Nerva's accession as Emperor, passed *damnatio memoriae* on his memory: his coins and statues were melted, his arches were torn down, and his name was erased from all public records.

Key Terms

- **Marcus Cocceius Nerva** – Succeeded Domitian as emperor the same day as his assassination. Founded the Nerva-Antonine Dynasty.
- **Roman Senate** – A political institution in ancient Rome, and one of the most enduring institutions in Roman history, established in the first days of the city. By the time of the Roman Empire, it had lost much of its political power as well as its prestige.
- **Damnatio memoriae** – Latin for "condemnation of memory," a form of dishonor that could be passed by the Roman Senate on traitors or others who brought discredit to the Roman State; the intent was to erase the malefactor from history, a task somewhat easier in ancient times, when documentation was limited.

Flavian rule came to an end on September 18, 96, when Domitian was assassinated. He was succeeded by the longtime Flavian supporter and advisor, Marcus Cocceius Nerva, who founded the long-lived Nerva-Antonine Dynasty.

Opposition to Domitian

Domitian's government exhibited totalitarian characteristics; he saw himself as the new Augustus, an enlightened despot destined to guide the Roman Empire into a new era of brilliance. Religious, military, and cultural propaganda fostered a cult of personality, and by nominating himself perpetual censor, he sought to control public and private morals. As a consequence, Domitian was popular with the people and army, but considered a tyrant by members of the Roman Senate.

Since the fall of the Republic, the authority of the Roman Senate had largely eroded under the quasi-monarchical system of government established by Augustus, known as the Principate. The Principate allowed the existence of a de facto dictatorial regime, while maintaining the formal framework of the Roman Republic. Most Emperors upheld the public facade of democracy, and in return the Senate implicitly acknowledged the Emperor's status as a de facto monarch.

Some rulers handled this arrangement with less subtlety than others. Domitian was not so subtle. From the outset of his reign, he stressed the reality of his autocracy. He disliked

aristocrats and had no fear of showing it, withdrawing every decision-making power from the Senate, and instead relying on a small set of friends and equestrians to control the important offices of state.

The dislike was mutual. After Domitian's assassination, the senators of Rome rushed to the Senate house, where they immediately passed a motion condemning his memory to oblivion. Under the rulers of the Nervan-Antonian Dynasty, senatorial authors published histories that elaborated on the view of Domitian as a tyrant. Modern revisionists have instead characterized Domitian as a ruthless but efficient autocrat, whose cultural, economic, and political program provided the foundation of the peaceful 2nd century.

Assassination

Domitian dealt with several revolts during his rule, the last of which was a successful plot to assassinate him. Domitian was assassinated on September 18, 96, in a palace conspiracy organized by court officials. A highly detailed account of the plot and the assassination is provided by Suetonius, who alleges that Domitian's chamberlain, Parthenius, was the chief instigator behind the conspiracy, citing the recent execution of Domitian's secretary, Epaphroditus, as the primary motive. The murder itself was carried out by a freedman of Parthenius, named Maximus, and a steward of Domitian's niece Flavia Domitilla, named Stephanus.

The precise involvement of the Praetorian Guard is less clear. At the time, the Guard was commanded by Titus Flavius Norbanus and Titus Petronius Secundus, and the latter was almost certainly aware of the plot. Cassius Dio, writing nearly a hundred years after the assassination, includes Domitia Longina among the conspirators, but in light of her attested devotion to Domitian—even years after her husband had died—her involvement in the plot seems highly unlikely.

Dio further suggests that the assassination was improvised, while Suetonius implies a well-organized conspiracy. For some days before the attack took place, Stephanus feigned an injury so as to be able to conceal a dagger beneath his bandages. On the day of the assassination, the doors to the servants' quarters were locked while Domitian's personal weapon of last resort, a sword he concealed beneath his pillow, had been removed in advance.

Domitian and Stephanus wrestled on the ground for some time, until the Emperor was finally overpowered and fatally stabbed by the conspirators; Stephanus was stabbed by Domitian during the struggle and died shortly afterward. Around noon, Domitian, just one month short of his 45th birthday, was dead. His body was carried away on a common bier, and unceremoniously cremated by his nurse Phyllis, who later mingled the ashes with those of his niece Julia, at the Flavian temple.

The End of the Flavian Dynasty

The same day as Domitian's death, the Senate proclaimed Marcus Cocceius Nerva to be emperor. Despite his political experience, this was a remarkable choice. Nerva was old and childless, and had spent much of his career out of the public light, prompting both ancient and modern authors to speculate on his involvement in Domitian's assassination.

According to Cassius Dio, the conspirators approached Nerva as a potential successor prior to the assassination, suggesting that he was at least aware of the plot. He does not appear in Suetonius' version of the events, but this may be understandable, since his works were published under Nerva's direct descendants, Trajan and Hadrian. To suggest the dynasty owed its accession to murder would have been less than sensitive.

On the other hand, Nerva lacked widespread support in the Empire, and as a known Flavian loyalist, his track record would not have recommended him to the conspirators. The precise facts have been



Figure 139 Domitian as Emperor (Vatican Museums), possibly recut from a statue of Nero.

obscured by history, but modern historians believe Nerva was proclaimed emperor solely on the initiative of the Senate, within hours after the news of the assassination broke. The decision may have been hasty so as to avoid civil war, but neither appears to have been involved in the conspiracy.

The Senate nonetheless rejoiced at the death of Domitian, and immediately following Nerva's accession as Emperor, passed *damnatio memoriae* on his memory: his coins and statues were melted, his arches were torn down, and his name was erased from all public records. Domitian and, over a century later, Publius Septimius Geta, were the only emperors known to have officially received a *damnatio memoriae*, though others may have received de facto ones. In many instances, existing portraits of Domitian, such as those found on the Cancelleria Reliefs, were simply re-carved to fit the likeness of Nerva, which allowed quick production of new images and recycling of previous material. Yet the order of the Senate was only partially executed in Rome, and wholly disregarded in most of the provinces outside Italy.

Although Nerva's brief reign was marred by financial difficulties and his inability to assert his authority over the Roman army (who were still loyal to Domitian), his greatest success was his ability to ensure a peaceful transition of power after his death, thus founding the Nerva-Antonine Dynasty.

Attributions

- The Flavian Dynasty
 - "Dalmatia." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dalmatia>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Vespasian." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vespasian>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Pannonia." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pannonia>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Moesia." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moesia>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Flavian dynasty." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flavian_dynasty. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Egypt (Roman province)."
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egypt_\(Roman_province\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egypt_(Roman_province)). Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- "Judea (Roman province)."
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judea_\(Roman_province\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judea_(Roman_province)). Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Roman_Empire_69.svg.png."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Roman_Empire_69.svg. Wikimedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "440px-Vespasianus01_pushkin_edit.png."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vespasianus01_pushkin_edit.png.
 Wikimedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- Military Achievements of the Flavians
 - "Siege of Jerusalem."
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege_of_Jerusalem_\(AD_70\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege_of_Jerusalem_(AD_70)). Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Flavian dynasty." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flavian_dynasty. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "660px-Arch_of_Titus_Menorah.png."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Arch_of_Titus_Menorah.png.
 Wikimedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- Eruptions of Vesuvius and Pompeii
 - "Eruption of Mount Vesuvius."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eruption_of_Mount_Vesuvius_in_79. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Flavian dynasty." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flavian_dynasty. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Pompeii." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pompeii>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Ring_Lady.JPG." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Ring_Lady.JPG.
 Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Pompeii_Garden_of_the_Fugitives_02.jpg."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pompeii_Garden_of_the_Fugitives_02.jpg. Wikimedia GNU FDL 1.2.
- Flavian Architecture
 - "Colosseum." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colosseum>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA

3.0.

- "Flavian dynasty."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flavian_dynasty#Construction. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Colosseum_in_Rome,_Italy_-_April_2007.jpg."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Colosseum_in_Rome,_Italy_-_April_2007.jpg. Wikimedia CC BY-SA 2.5.
- Fall of the Flavian Emperors
 - "Domitian." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domitian>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Flavian dynasty." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flavian_dynasty. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Domitian_statue_Vatican.png."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Domitian_statue_Vatican.png.
Wikimedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

6.6: Nerva-Antonine Dynasty

6.6.1: The Nerva-Antonine Dynasty

The Golden Age of Rome was a period of prosperity that fell under the "Five Good Emperors" of the Nerva-Antonine Dynasty: Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, and Marcus Aurelius.

Learning Objective

- Describe the characteristics of the Golden Age and the achievements of the Five Good Emperors

Key Points

- The first five of the six successions within the Nerva-Antonine Dynasty were notable in that the reigning emperor adopted the candidate of his choice to be his successor, rather than choosing a biological heir.
- Although much of his life remains obscure, Nerva was considered a wise and moderate emperor by ancient historians. Nerva's greatest success was his ability to ensure a peaceful transition of power after his death, thus founding the Nerva-Antonine Dynasty.
- Trajan is remembered as a successful soldier-emperor who presided over the greatest military expansion in Roman history, and led the empire to attain its maximum territorial extent by the time of his death.
- Hadrian was known to be a humanist and a philhellene, renowned for his building projects and commitment to his military lifestyle.
- Marcus Aurelius, the philosopher-emperor, enjoyed not only military successes during his reign, but also authored a defining Stoic tome on equanimity in the midst of conflict.

Key Terms

- **Marcus Aurelius** – Roman Emperor from 161 to 180 CE, as well as a notable Stoic philosopher.
- **Hadrian** – Roman Emperor from 117 to 138 CE. Known for his grand building projects and his philhellenism.

- **Trajan** – Roman emperor from 98 CE until 117 CE. Officially declared by the Senate as *optimus princeps*, and known for his bold expansion of Roman borders.

Nerva-Antonine Dynasty

The Nerva-Antonine Dynasty was a dynasty of seven Roman Emperors who ruled over the Roman Empire during a period of prosperity from 96 CE to 192 CE. These emperors are Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Verus, and Commodus.

The first five of the six successions within this dynasty were notable in that the reigning emperor adopted the candidate of his choice to be his successor. Under Roman law, an adoption established a bond legally as strong as that of kinship. As such, the second through sixth Nerva-Antonine emperors are also called Adoptive Emperors.

The importance of official adoption in Roman society has often been considered as a conscious repudiation of the principle of dynastic inheritance, and has been deemed as one of the factors of the period's prosperity. However, this was not a new practice. It was common for patrician families to adopt, and Roman emperors had adopted heirs in the past; Emperor Augustus had adopted Tiberius, and Emperor Claudius had adopted Nero. Julius Caesar, dictator perpetuo and considered to be instrumental in the transition from Republic to Empire, adopted Gaius Octavius, who would become Augustus, Rome's first emperor. Moreover, there was a family connection, as Trajan adopted his first cousin once removed and great-nephew by marriage, Hadrian. Hadrian made his half-nephew by marriage, and heir Antoninus Pius, adopt both Hadrian's second cousin three times removed, and half-great-nephew by marriage, Marcus Aurelius, also Antoninus' nephew by marriage, and the son of his original planned successor, Lucius Verus. The naming by Marcus Aurelius of his son, Commodus, was considered to be an unfortunate choice and the beginning of the Empire's decline.

With Commodus' murder in 192, the Nerva-Antonine Dynasty came to an end; it was followed by a period of turbulence, known as the Year of the Five Emperors.

The Five Good Emperors

The rulers commonly known as the "Five Good Emperors" were Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, and Marcus Aurelius. The term was coined by the political philosopher,

Niccolò Machiavelli, in 1503:

From the study of this history we may also learn how a good government is to be established; for while all the emperors who succeeded to the throne by birth, except Titus, were bad, all were good who succeeded by adoption, as in the case of the five from Nerva to Marcus. But as soon as the empire fell once more to the heirs by birth, its ruin recommenced. Titus, Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus, and Marcus had no need of praetorian cohorts, or of countless legions to guard them, but were defended by their own good lives, the good-will of their subjects, and the attachment of the Senate.

An alternative hypothesis posits that adoptive succession is thought to have arisen because of a lack of biological heirs. All but the last of the adoptive emperors had no legitimate biological sons to succeed them. They were thus obliged to pick a successor somewhere else; as soon as the Emperor could look towards a biological son to succeed him, adoptive succession was set aside. Nonetheless, this period was a time of peace and prosperity.

Nerva

In 96 CE, Domitian was assassinated in a palace conspiracy involving members of the Praetorian Guard and several of his freedmen. On the same day, Nerva was declared emperor by the Roman Senate. This occasion marked the first time the Senate elected a Roman Emperor.

Nerva's brief reign was marred by financial difficulties and his inability to assert his authority over the Roman army. A revolt by the Praetorian Guard in October 97 essentially forced him to adopt an heir. After some deliberation, Nerva chose Trajan, a young and popular general, as his successor. After barely fifteen months in office, Nerva died of natural causes in 98, and upon his death, he was succeeded and deified by Trajan. Although much of his life remains obscure, Nerva was considered a wise and moderate emperor by ancient historians. Nerva's greatest success was his ability to ensure a peaceful transition of power after his death, thus founding the Nerva-Antonine Dynasty.

Trajan



Figure 140 Bust of Trajan

Trajan was Roman emperor from 98 CE until his death in 117 CE. Officially declared by the Senate as *optimus princeps* ("the best ruler"), Trajan is remembered as a successful soldier-emperor who presided over the greatest military expansion in Roman history, and led the empire to attain its maximum territorial extent by the time of his death. He is also known for his philanthropic rule, and oversaw extensive public building programs and implemented social welfare policies.

Hadrian

Hadrian was Roman Emperor from 117 to 138 CE. Known for his grand building projects, he re-built the Pantheon and constructed the Temple of Venus and Roma. He is also known for building Hadrian's Wall, which marked the northern limit of

Roman Britain. During his reign, Hadrian traveled to nearly every province of the Empire.

An ardent admirer of Greece, he sought to make Athens the cultural capital of the empire, and created a popular cult in the name of his Greek lover, Antinous. He spent extensive amounts of his time with the military; he usually wore military attire and even dined and slept amongst the soldiers.



Figure 141 Bust of Hadrian

Marcus Aurelius

Hadrian was succeeded by Antoninus Pius, who was subsequently succeeded by Marcus Aurelius, who was Roman Emperor from 161 to 180 CE. He ruled with Lucius Verus as co-emperor from 161 until Verus' death in 169. He

was the last of the Five Good Emperors and was a practitioner of Stoicism. His untitled writing, commonly known as the *Meditations*, is the most significant source of our modern understanding of ancient Stoic philosophy.

Marcus Aurelius was an effective military commander, and Rome enjoyed various military

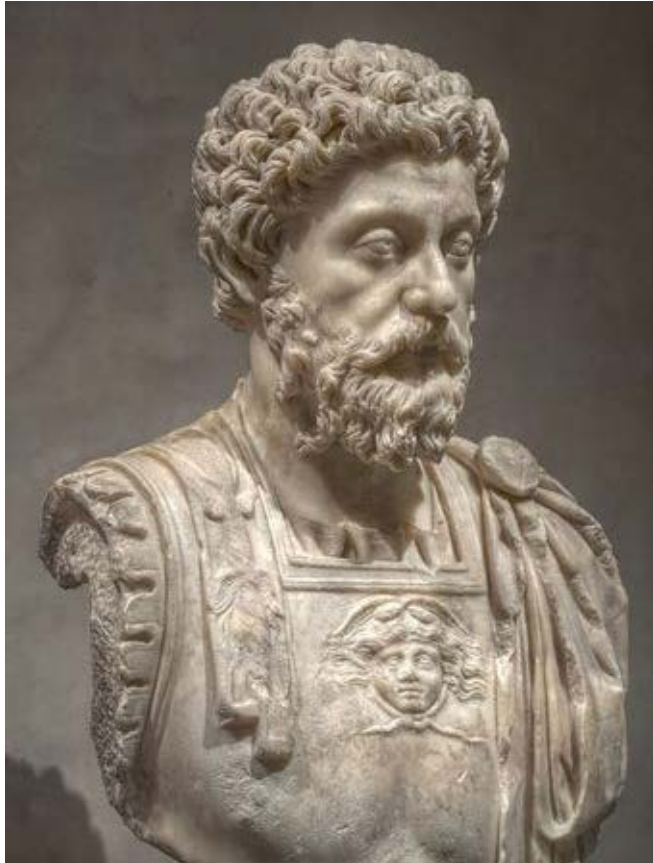


Figure 142 Bust of Marcus Aurelius

successes against outsiders who were beginning to threaten the Empire. During his reign, the Empire defeated a revitalized Parthian Empire in the East: Aurelius' general, Avidius Cassius, sacked the capital Ctesiphon in 164. In central Europe, Aurelius fought the Marcomanni, Quadi, and Sarmatians with success during the Marcomannic Wars, although the threat of the Germanic tribes began to represent a troubling reality for the empire. A revolt in the East led by Avidius Cassius failed to gain momentum and was suppressed immediately.

His *Meditations*, written in Greek while he was on a campaign between 170 and 180, is still revered as a literary monument to a

philosophy of service and duty, which describes how to find and preserve equanimity in the midst of conflict by following nature as a source of guidance and inspiration.

6.6.2: Military Successes of the Nerva-Antonine Dynasty

The Nerva-Antonine Dynasty saw the greatest military expansion in Roman history, leading the empire to attain its maximum territorial extent.

Learning Objective

- Examine the military efforts of the Nerva-Antonine emperors

Key Points

- The second emperor in the dynasty, Trajan, is remembered as a successful soldier-emperor who presided over the greatest military expansion in Roman history, through the Dacian Wars.
- The conclusion of the Dacian Wars marked the beginning of a period of sustained growth and relative peace in Rome.
- Despite his own great reputation as a military administrator, Hadrian's reign was marked by a general lack of documented major military conflicts, apart from the Second Roman–Jewish War, and instead is marked by pacifist tendencies.
- The peace policy was strengthened by the erection of permanent fortifications along the empire's borders, the most famous of these being the massive Hadrian's Wall in Great Britain.

Key Terms

- **Dacian Wars** – Two military campaigns fought between the Roman Empire and Dacia during Roman Emperor Trajan's rule.
- **Hadrian's Wall** – A defensive fortification in the Roman province of Britannia, begun in 122 CE during the reign of the emperor Hadrian.

Several of the Nerva-Antonine Dynasty emperors were known for their notable military successes.

Trajan and the Dacian Wars

After Nerva's short rule, his adoptive heir, Trajan, a popular military leader, ruled as emperor from 98-117 CE. Officially declared by the Senate as *optimus princeps* ("the best ruler"), Trajan is remembered as a successful soldier-emperor who presided over the greatest military expansion in Roman history, leading the empire to attain its maximum territorial extent by the time of his death.

The Dacian Wars (101-102, 105-106) were two military campaigns fought between the Roman Empire and Dacia during Roman Emperor Trajan's rule. The conflicts were triggered by the constant Dacian threat on the Danubian Roman Province of Moesia, and also by the increasing need for resources in the economy of the Roman Empire.

Dacia, an area north of Macedon and Greece, and east of the Danube, had been on the Roman agenda since before the days of Caesar, when they defeated a Roman army at the Battle of Histria. In 85 CE, the Dacians swarmed over the Danube and pillaged Moesia, and initially defeated the army that Emperor Domitian sent against them. The Romans were defeated in the Battle of Tapae in 88, and a truce was established.

Emperor Trajan recommenced hostilities against Dacia and, following an uncertain number of battles, defeated the Dacian King Decebalus in the Second Battle of Tapae in 101. With Trajan's troops pressing towards the Dacian capital, Sarmizegetusa Regia, Decebalus once more sought truce terms. Decebalus rebuilt his power over the following years and attacked Roman garrisons again in 105. In response, Trajan again marched into Dacia, besieging the Dacian capital in the Siege of Sarmizegetusa, and razing it. With Dacia quelled, Trajan subsequently invaded the Parthian empire to the east, his conquests expanding the Roman Empire to its greatest extent. Rome's borders in the east were indirectly governed through a system of client states for some time, leading to less direct campaigning than in the west in this period.

The conclusion of the Dacian Wars marked a triumph for Rome and its armies. Trajan announced 123 days of celebrations throughout the Empire. Dacia's rich gold mines were secured, and it is estimated that Dacia then contributed



Figure 143 Fiery battle scene between the Roman and Dacian armies.

700 million Denarii per annum to the Roman economy, providing finance for Rome's future campaigns, and assisting with the rapid expansion of Roman towns throughout Europe.

The two wars were notable victories in Rome's extensive expansionist campaigns, gaining Trajan the people's admiration and support. The conclusion of the Dacian Wars marked the beginning of a period of sustained growth and relative peace in Rome. Trajan began extensive building projects and became an honorable civil leader, improving Rome's civic infrastructure, thereby paving the way for internal growth and reinforcement of the empire as a whole.

Hadrian and Hadrian's Wall

Despite his own great reputation as a military administrator, Hadrian's reign was marked by a general lack of documented major military conflicts, apart from the Second Roman-Jewish War. Hadrian had already surrendered Trajan's conquests in Mesopotamia, considering them to be indefensible. In the East, Hadrian contented himself with retaining suzerainty over Osroene, which was ruled by the client king, Parthamaspates, once client king of Parthia under Trajan.

Hadrian's abandonment of an aggressive policy was something the Senate and its historians never forgave: the fourth century historian, Aurelius Victor, charged him with being jealous of Trajan's exploits and deliberately trying to downplay their worthiness. It is more probable that Hadrian simply considered that the financial strain to be incurred through keeping a policy of conquests was something the Roman Empire could not afford. Proof of this is the disappearance during his reigns of two entire legions. Also, the acknowledgement of the indefensible character of the Mesopotamian conquests had perhaps already been made by Trajan himself, who had disengaged from them at the time of his death.



Figure 144 Sections of Hadrian's Wall remain along the route, though much of it has been dismantled over the years, in order to use the stones for various nearby construction projects.

The peace policy was strengthened by the erection of permanent fortifications along the empire's borders. The most famous of these is the massive Hadrian's Wall in Great Britain, built on stone and doubled on its rear by a ditch (Vallum Hadriani), which marked the boundary between a strictly military zone and the province. The Danube and Rhine borders were strengthened with a series of mostly wooden fortifications, forts, outposts, and watchtowers, the latter specifically improving communications and local area security.

To maintain morale and prevent the troops from becoming restive, Hadrian established intensive drill routines, and personally inspected the armies. Although his coins showed

military images almost as often as peaceful ones, Hadrian's policy was peace through strength, even threat, with an emphasis on discipline, which was the subject of two monetary series.

6.6.3: Art and Culture Under the Nerva-Antonines

Emperor Hadrian, among other Nerva-Antonine emperors, patronized the arts, held public festivals, and influenced the culture of Rome and beyond.

Learning Objective

- Describe trends in art and culture under the Nerva-Antonines

Key Points

- Trajan was known for his philanthropic rule, overseeing extensive public building programs and implementing social welfare policies, as well as hosting major public festivals in the Colosseum.
- Emperor Hadrian had a major influence on Roman culture through his love of Greek culture.
- He patronized the arts, building and rebuilding important and influential structures, such as Hadrian's Villa. He also introduced Greek styles into public use, such as wearing a beard instead of being clean-shaven.
- As a cultural Hellenophile, Hadrian was familiar with the work of the philosophers Epictetus, Heliodorus, and Favorinus, and used their ideas to improve social welfare in Rome.

Key Terms

- **Philhellenism** – Used to describe both non-Greeks, such as Romans, who were fond of Greek culture, and Greeks who patriotically upheld their culture.
- **Hadrian's Villa** – A large Roman archaeological complex at Tivoli, Italy, built by Emperor Hadrian and based on Greek architectural styles.

Several of the Nerva-Antonine emperors are known for their support of the arts and culture of Rome.

Trajan

Trajan was known for his philanthropic rule, overseeing extensive public building programs and implementing social welfare policies, which earned him his enduring reputation as the second of the Five Good Emperors who presided over an era of peace and prosperity in the Mediterranean world. During a period of peace after the Dacian wars, he initiated a three-month gladiatorial festival in the great Colosseum in Rome (the precise date is unknown). Combining chariot racing, beast fights, and close-quarters gladiatorial bloodshed, this gory spectacle reputedly left 11,000 dead (mostly slaves and criminals, not to mention the thousands of wild animals killed alongside them), and attracted a total of five million spectators over the course of the festival. The care bestowed by Trajan on the managing of such public spectacles led the orator Fronto to state approvingly that Trajan had paid equal attention to entertainments as well as to serious issues. Fronto concluded that "neglect of serious matters can cause greater damage, but neglect of amusements greater discontent."

Hadrian



Figure 145 The ruins of Hadrian's Villa in their present state.

Hadrian has been described—first in an ancient anonymous source and later echoed by Ronald Syme, among others—as the most versatile of all the Roman emperors. He also liked to demonstrate knowledge of all intellectual and artistic fields. Above all, Hadrian patronized the arts. Hadrian's Villa at Tibur was the greatest Roman example of an Alexandrian garden, recreating a sacred landscape, albeit lost in large part to the despoliation of the ruins by the Cardinal d'Este, who had much of the marble removed to build Villa d'Este. In Rome, the Pantheon, originally built by Agrippa but destroyed by fire in 80, was rebuilt under Hadrian in the domed form it retains to this

day. It is among the best-preserved of Rome's ancient buildings, and was highly influential to many of the great architects of the Italian Renaissance and Baroque periods.

Another of Hadrian's contributions to popular Roman culture was the beard, which symbolized his philhellenism; Dio of Prusa had equated the generalized using of the beard with Hellenic ethos. Since the time of Scipio Africanus, it had been fashionable among the Romans to be clean-shaven. Also, all Roman emperors before Hadrian, except for Nero (also a great admirer of Greek culture), were clean shaven. Most of the emperors after Hadrian would be portrayed with beards. Their beards, however, were not worn out of an appreciation for Greek culture, but because the beard had, thanks to Hadrian, become fashionable. This new fashion lasted until the reign of Constantine the Great and was revived again by Phocas at the start of the 7th century. Notwithstanding his philhellenism, however, in all other everyday life matters, Hadrian behaved as a Roman civic traditionalist, who demanded the use of the toga by senators and knights in public, and strict separation between the sexes in the public baths and theaters.

Hadrian wrote poetry in both Latin and Greek; one of the few surviving examples is a Latin poem he reportedly composed on his deathbed. Some of his Greek productions found their way into the Palatine Anthology.

As a cultural Hellenophile, Hadrian was familiar with the work of the philosophers Epictetus, Heliodorus, and Favorinus. At home he attended to social needs. Hadrian mitigated slavery; masters were forbidden from killing their slaves unless allowed by a court to punish them for a grave offense. Masters were forbidden to sell slaves to a gladiator trainer or to a procurer, except as justified punishment. Hadrian also had the legal code humanized and forbade torture of free defendants and witnesses, legislating against the common practice of condemning free persons in order to have them tortured as a means of gathering information on their supposed activities and accomplices. He also abolished ergastula—private prisons for slaves in which kidnapped free men could also be kept.

Attributions

- The Nerva-Antoine Dynasty
 - "Nerva–Antonine dynasty."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NervaAntonine_dynasty. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- "Hadrian." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hadrian>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
- "Nerva." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nerva>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
- "Trajan." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trajan>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
- "Marcus Aurelius." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Aurelius. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
- "Hadrian."

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bust_Hadrian_Musei_Capitolini_MC_817_cropped.jp Wikimedia Public domain.

- "Marcus Aurelius."
- https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:L%27Image_et_le_Pouvoir_-_Buste_cuirass%C3%A9_de_Marc_Aur%C3%A8le_ag%C3%A9_-_3.jpg.
Wikimedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- "Trajan."
- https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Traianus_Glyptothek_Munich_336.jpg.
g. Wikimedia Public domain.

- Military Successes of the Nerva-Antonine Dynasty

- "Nerva-Antonine dynasty."
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NervaAntonine_dynasty. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- "Trajan." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trajan#Roman_Emperor. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- "Trajan's Dacian Wars."
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trajan%27s_Dacian_Wars. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- "Hadrian's wall at Greenhead Lough.jpg."
- https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hadrian%27s_wall_at_Greenhead_Lough.jpg. Wikimedia Public domain.

- "032_Conrad_Cichorius,_Die_Reliefs_der_Traianssäule,_Tafel_XXXII.jpg."
- https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:032_Conrad_Cichorius,_Die_Reliefs_der_Traianss%27säule,_Tafel_XXXII.jpg.
Wikimedia Public domain.

- Art and Culture Under the Nerva-Antonines

- "Hadrian."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hadrian#Cultural_pursuits_and_patronage.

Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- "Trajan." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trajan>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- "Nerva-Antonine dynasty."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nerva%E2%80%93Antonine_dynasty. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- "1024px-Hadrian_villa_ruins.JPG."

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hadrian_villa_ruins.JPG. Wikimedia GNU FDL 1.2.

6.7: Christianity and the Late Roman Empire

6.7.1: Crises of the Roman Empire

The Crisis of the Third Century was a period in which the Roman Empire nearly collapsed under the combined pressures of invasion, civil war, plague, and economic depression.

Learning Objective

- Describe the problems afflicting the Roman Empire during the third century

Key Points

- The situation of the Roman Empire became dire in 235 CE, when Emperor Alexander Severus was murdered by his own troops after defeat by Germanic tribes.
- In the years following the emperor's death, generals of the Roman army fought each other for control of the Empire, and neglected their duties of defending the empire from invasion. As a result, various provinces became victims of frequent raids.
- By 268, the Empire had split into three competing states: the Gallic Empire, including the Roman provinces of Gaul, Britannia, and Hispania; the Palmyrene Empire, including the eastern provinces of Syria Palaestina and Aegyptus; and the Italian-centered and independent Roman Empire proper.
- One of the most profound and lasting effects of the Crisis of the Third Century was the disruption of Rome's extensive internal trade network under the Pax Romana.
- The continuing problems of the Empire would be radically addressed by Diocletian, allowing the Empire to continue to survive in the West for over a century, and in the East for over a millennium.

Key Terms

- **Pax Romana** – The long period of relative peacefulness and minimal expansion by the Roman military force that was experienced by the Roman Empire after the end of the Final War of the Roman Republic, and before the beginning of the Crisis of

the Third Century.

- **Coloni** – A tenant farmer from the late Roman Empire and Early Middle Ages; sharecroppers.
- **Crisis of the Third Century** – A period in which the Roman Empire nearly collapsed under the combined pressures of invasion, civil war, plague, and economic depression.

Overview

The Crisis of the Third Century, also known as Military Anarchy or the Imperial Crisis, (235-284 CE) was a period in which the Roman Empire nearly collapsed under the combined pressures of invasion, civil war, plague, and economic depression. The Crisis began with the assassination of Emperor Severus Alexander by his own troops in 235, initiating a 50-year period in which there were at least 26 claimants to the title of Emperor,



Figure 146 The divided Empire during the Crisis of the Third Century.

mostly prominent Roman army generals, who assumed imperial power over all or part of the Empire. Twenty-six men were officially accepted by the Roman Senate as emperor during this period, and thus became legitimate emperors.

By 268, the Empire had split into three competing states: the Gallic Empire, including the Roman provinces of Gaul, Britannia, and (briefly) Hispania; the Palmyrene Empire, including the eastern provinces of Syria Palaestina and Aegyptus; and the Italian-centered and independent Roman Empire proper, between them. Later, Aurelian (270-275) reunited the empire; the Crisis ended with the ascension and reforms of Diocletian in 284.

The Crisis resulted in such profound changes in the Empire's institutions, society, economic life, and, eventually, religion, that it is increasingly seen by most historians as defining the transition between the historical periods of classical antiquity and late antiquity.

History of the Crisis

The situation of the Roman Empire became dire in 235 CE, when Emperor Alexander Severus was murdered by his own troops. Many Roman legions had been defeated during a campaign against Germanic peoples raiding across the borders, while the emperor was focused primarily on the dangers from the Sassanid Persian Empire. Leading his troops personally, Alexander Severus resorted to diplomacy and paying tribute, in an attempt to pacify the Germanic chieftains quickly. According to Herodian, this cost him the respect of his troops, who may have felt they should be punishing the tribes who were intruding on Rome's territory.

In the years following the emperor's death, generals of the Roman army fought each other for control of the Empire and neglected their duties of defending the empire from invasion. Provincials became victims of frequent raids along the length of the Rhine and Danube rivers, by such foreign tribes as the Carpians, Goths, Vandals, and Alamanni, and attacks from Sassanids in the east. Climate changes and a rise in sea levels ruined the agriculture of what is now the Low Countries, forcing tribes to migrate. Additionally, in 251, the Plague of Cyprian (possibly smallpox) broke out, causing large-scale death, and possibly weakened the ability of the Empire to defend itself.

After the loss of Valerian in 260, the Roman Empire was beset by usurpers, who broke it up into three competing states. The Roman provinces of Gaul, Britain, and Hispania broke off to form the Gallic Empire. After the death of Odaenathus in 267, the eastern provinces of Syria, Palestine, and Aegyptus became independent as the Palmyrene Empire, leaving the remaining Italian-centered Roman Empire proper in the middle.

An invasion by a vast host of Goths was defeated at the Battle of Naissus in 268 or 269. This victory was significant as the turning point of the crisis, when a series of tough, energetic soldier-emperors took power. Victories by Emperor Claudius II Gothicus over the next two years drove back the Alamanni and recovered Hispania from the Gallic Empire. When Claudius died in 270 of the plague, Aurelian, who had commanded the cavalry at Naissus, succeeded him as the emperor and continued the restoration of the Empire.

Aurelian reigned (270-275) through the worst of the crisis, defeating the Vandals, the Visigoths, the Palmyrenes, the Persians, and then the remainder of the Gallic Empire. By

late 274, the Roman Empire was reunited into a single entity, and the frontier troops were back in place. More than a century would pass before Rome again lost military ascendancy over its external enemies. However, dozens of formerly thriving cities, especially in the Western Empire, had been ruined, their populations dispersed and, with the breakdown of the economic system, could not be rebuilt. Major cities and towns, even Rome itself, had not needed fortifications for many centuries; many then surrounded themselves with thick walls.

Finally, although Aurelian had played a significant role in restoring the Empire's borders from external threat, more fundamental problems remained. In particular, the right of succession had never been clearly defined in the Roman Empire, leading to continuous civil wars as competing factions in the military, Senate, and other parties put forward their favored candidate for emperor. Another issue was the sheer size of the Empire, which made it difficult for a single autocratic ruler to effectively manage multiple threats at the same time. These continuing problems would be radically addressed by Diocletian, allowing the Empire to continue to survive in the West for over a century, and in the East for over a millennium.

Impact

One of the most profound and lasting effects of the Crisis of the Third Century was the disruption of Rome's extensive internal trade network. Ever since the Pax Romana, starting with Augustus, the Empire's economy had depended in large part on trade between Mediterranean ports and across the extensive road systems to the Empire's interior. Merchants could travel from one end of the Empire to the other in relative safety within a few weeks, moving agricultural goods produced in the provinces to the cities, and manufactured goods produced by the great cities of the East to the more rural provinces.

With the onset of the Crisis of the Third Century, however, this vast internal trade network broke down. The widespread civil unrest made it no longer safe for merchants to travel as they once had, and the financial crisis that struck made exchange very difficult with the debased currency. This produced profound changes that, in many ways, foreshadowed the very decentralized economic character of the coming Middle Ages.

Large landowners, no longer able to successfully export their crops over long distances,

began producing food for subsistence and local barter. Rather than import manufactured goods from the Empire's great urban areas, they began to manufacture many goods locally, often on their own estates, thus beginning the self-sufficient "house economy" that would become commonplace in later centuries, reaching its final form in the Middle Ages' manorialism. The common free people of the Roman cities, meanwhile, began to move out into the countryside in search of food and better protection.

Made desperate by economic necessity, many of these former city dwellers, as well as many small farmers, were forced to give up hard-earned, basic civil rights in order to receive protection from large land-holders. In doing so, they became a half-free class of Roman citizen known as *coloni*. They were tied to the land, and in later Imperial law their status was made hereditary. This provided an early model for serfdom, the origins of medieval feudal society and of the medieval peasantry.

6.7.2: Diocletian and the Tetrarchy

Facing the pressures of civil war, plague, invasion, and economic depression, Diocletian was able to stabilize the Roman Empire for another hundred years through economic reform and the establishment of the Tetrarchy.

Learning Objective

- Describe the change in attitudes towards Christians and their statuses within the Roman Empire

Key Points

- Diocletian secured the empire's borders and purged it of all threats to his power. He separated and enlarged the empire's civil and military services, and reorganized the empire's provincial divisions, establishing the largest and most bureaucratic government in the history of the empire.
- Diocletian also restructured the Roman government by establishing the Tetrarchy, a system of rule in which four men shared rule over the massive Roman Empire. The empire was effectively divided in two, with an Augustus and a subordinate Caesar in each half.
- Diocletian established administrative capitals for each of the Tetrarchs, which were

located closer to the empire's borders. Though Rome retained its unique Prefect of the City, it was no longer the administrative capital.

- By 313, therefore, there remained only two emperors: Constantine in the west and Licinius in the east. The tetrarchic system was at an end, although it took until 324 for Constantine to finally defeat Licinius, reunite the two halves of the Roman Empire, and declare himself sole Augustus.

Key Terms

- **Tetrarchy** – A form of government in which power is divided between four individuals. In ancient Rome, a system of government instituted by Diocletian that split power between two rulers in the east, and two rulers in the west.
- **Diocletian** – Roman emperor from 284 to 305 CE. Established the tetrarchy and instituted economic and tax reforms to stabilize the Roman Empire.

Diocletian and the Stabilization of the Roman Empire

Diocletian was Roman emperor from 284 to 305 CE. Born to a family of low status in the Roman province of Dalmatia, Diocletian rose through the ranks of the military to become cavalry commander to the Emperor Carus. After the deaths of Carus and his son Numerian on campaign in Persia, Diocletian was proclaimed emperor. Diocletian's reign stabilized the empire, and marked the end of the Crisis of the Third Century. He appointed



Figure 147 Reconstruction of Diocletian's Palace in its original appearance, upon completion in 305 CE (viewed from the south-west).

fellow officer, Maximian, as Augustus, co-emperor, in 286. Diocletian delegated further in 293, appointing Galerius and Constantius as Caesars, junior co-emperors. Under this "tetrarchy," or "rule of four," each emperor would rule over a quarter-division of the empire. Diocletian further secured the empire's borders and purged it of all threats to his power.

He separated and enlarged the empire's civil and military services and reorganized the empire's provincial divisions, establishing the largest and most bureaucratic government in the history of the empire. He established

new administrative centers in Nicomedia, Mediolanum, Antioch, and Trier, closer to the empire's frontiers than the traditional capital at Rome had been. Building on third-century trends towards absolutism, he styled himself an autocrat, elevating himself above the empire's masses with imposing forms of court ceremonies and architecture. Bureaucratic and military growth, constant campaigning, and construction projects increased the state's expenditures and necessitated a comprehensive tax reform. From at least 297 on, imperial taxation was standardized, made more equitable, and levied at generally higher rates.

The Tetrarchy

The first phase of Diocletian's government restructuring, sometimes referred to as the diarchy ("rule of two"), involved the designation of the general Maximian as co-emperor—first as Caesar (junior emperor) in 285, then Augustus in 286. This reorganization allowed Diocletian to take care of matters in the eastern regions of the empire, while Maximian similarly took charge of the western regions, thereby halving the administrative work required to oversee an empire as large as Rome's. In 293, feeling more focus was needed on both civic and military problems, Diocletian, with Maximian's consent, expanded the imperial college by appointing two Caesars (one responsible to each Augustus)—Galerius and Constantius Chlorus.

In 305, the senior emperors jointly abdicated and retired, allowing Constantius and Galerius to be elevated in rank to Augusti. They in turn appointed two new Caesars—Severus II in the west under Constantius, and Maximinus in the east under Galerius—thereby creating the second tetrarchy.

The four tetrarchs based themselves not at Rome but in other cities closer to the frontiers, mainly intended as headquarters for the defense of the empire against bordering rivals. Although Rome ceased to be an operational capital, it continued to be the nominal capital of the entire Roman Empire, not reduced to the status of a province, but under its own, unique Prefect of the City (*praefectus urbis*).

The first zone is the District of Constantius as Caesar, which included Britanniae, Viennensis, and Galliae. Its capital was Trier. The second zone is the District of Maximian as Augustus, which included Hispania, Africa, and Italia. Its capital was Milan. The third zone is the District of Galerius as Caesar, which included Pannoniae, Moesiae, and

Thracia. Its capital was Sirmium. The fourth zone is the District of Diocletian as Augustus, which included Asiana, Pontica, and Oriens. Its capital was Nicomedia.

In terms of regional jurisdiction, there was no precise division between the four tetrarchs, and this period did not see the Roman state actually split up into four distinct sub-empires. Each emperor had his zone of influence within the Roman Empire, but this influence mainly applied to the theater of war. The tetrarch was himself often in the field, while delegating most of the administration to the hierarchic bureaucracy headed by his respective



Figure 148 This map shows the four zones of influence under Diocletian's tetrarchy.

Praetorian Prefect. The Praetorian Prefect was the title of a high office in the Roman Empire, originating as the commander of the Praetorian Guard, the office gradually acquired extensive legal and administrative functions, with its holders becoming the emperor's chief aides.

Demise of the Tetrarchy

When, in 305, the 20-year term of Diocletian and Maximian ended, both abdicated. Their Caesares, Galerius and Constantius Chlorus, were both raised to the rank of Augustus, and two new Caesares were appointed: Maximinus (Caesar to Galerius) and Flavius Valerius Severus (Caesar to Constantius). These four formed the second tetrarchy.

However, the system broke down very quickly thereafter. When Constantius died in 306, Galerius promoted Severus to Augustus while Constantine, Constantius' son, was proclaimed Augustus by his father's troops. At the same time, Maxentius, the son of Maximian, who also resented being left out of the new arrangements, defeated Severus before forcing him to abdicate and then arranging his murder in 307. Maxentius and Maximian both then declared themselves Augusti. By 308, there were therefore no fewer than four claimants to the rank of Augustus (Galerius, Constantine, Maximian and Maxentius), and only one to that of Caesar (Maximinus).

In 308, Galerius, together with the retired emperor Diocletian and the supposedly retired Maximian, called an imperial "conference" at Carnuntum on the River Danube. The council agreed that Licinius would become Augustus in the West, with Constantine as his Caesar. In the East, Galerius remained Augustus, and Maximinus remained his Caesar. Maximian was to retire, and Maxentius was declared a usurper. This agreement proved disastrous: by 308 Maxentius had become de facto ruler of Italy and Africa even without any imperial rank, and neither Constantine nor Maximinus—who had both been Caesars since 306 and 305, respectively—were prepared to tolerate the promotion of the Augustus Licinius as their superior.

After an abortive attempt to placate both Constantine and Maximinus with the meaningless title *filius Augusti* ("son of the Augustus," essentially an alternative title for Caesar), they both had to be recognized as Augusti in 309. However, four full Augusti all at odds with each other did not bode well for the tetrarchic system.

Between 309 and 313, most of the claimants to the imperial office died or were killed in various civil wars. Constantine forced Maximian's suicide in 310. Galerius died naturally in 311. Maxentius was defeated by Constantine at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312, and subsequently killed. Maximinus committed suicide at Tarsus in 313, after being defeated in battle by Licinius.

By 313, therefore, there remained only two emperors: Constantine in the west and Licinius in the east. The tetrarchic system was at an end, although it took until 324 for Constantine to finally defeat Licinius, reunite the two halves of the Roman Empire, and declare himself sole Augustus.

6.7.3: The Rise of Christianity

Though the early Christians were persecuted under some emperors, such as Nero and Diocletian, the religion continued to thrive and grow, eventually becoming the official religion of the Roman Empire under Constantine.

Learning Objective

- Describe the challenges Christians faced in the Roman Empire

Key Points

- Christians suffered from sporadic and localized persecutions over a period of two and a half centuries, as their refusal to participate in Imperial Cult of Rome was considered an act of treason, and was thus punishable by execution.
- The Diocletianic, or Great Persecution, was the last and most severe persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire, which lasted from 302-311 CE. Galerius issued an edict of toleration in 311, which granted Christians the right to practice their religion, but did not restore any taken property back to them.
- The Edict of Milan in 313 made the empire officially neutral with regard to religious worship; it neither made the traditional religions illegal nor made Christianity the state religion.

Key Terms

- **The Great Persecution** – The last and most severe persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire.
- **Edict of Milan** – An agreement in 313 CE by Constantine and Licinius to treat Christians benevolently within the Roman Empire.

Persecution of Early Christians

Christianity posed a serious threat to the traditional Romans. The idea of monotheism was considered offensive against the polytheistic Roman pantheon, and came into further conflict with the Imperial Cult, in which emperors and some members of their families were worshipped as divine. As such, Christianity was considered criminal and was punished harshly.

The first recorded official persecution of Christians on behalf of the Roman Empire was in 64 CE, when, as reported by the Roman historian Tacitus, Emperor Nero blamed Christians for the Great Fire of Rome. According to Church tradition, it was during the reign of Nero that Peter and Paul were martyred in Rome. However, modern historians debate whether the Roman government distinguished between Christians and Jews prior to Nerva's modification of the Fiscus Judaicus in 96, from which point practicing Jews paid the tax and Christians did not.

The Diocletianic or Great Persecution was the last and most severe persecution of

Christians in the Roman Empire, which lasted from 302-311 CE. In 303, the emperors Diocletian, Maximian, Galerius, and Constantius issued a series of edicts rescinding the legal rights of Christians and demanding that they comply with traditional Roman religious practices. Later edicts targeted the clergy and ordered all inhabitants to sacrifice to the Roman gods (a policy known as universal sacrifice). The persecution varied in intensity across the empire—it was weakest in Gaul and Britain, where only the first edict was applied, and strongest in the Eastern provinces. Persecutory laws were nullified by different emperors at different times, but Constantine and Licinius's Edict of Milan (313) has traditionally marked the end of the persecution.

During the Great Persecution, Diocletian ordered Christian buildings and the homes of Christians torn down, and their sacred books collected and burned during the Great Persecution. Christians were arrested, tortured, mutilated, burned, starved, and condemned to gladiatorial contests to amuse spectators. The Great Persecution officially ended in April of 311, when Galerius, senior emperor of the Tetrarchy, issued an edict of toleration which granted Christians the right to practice their religion, though it did not restore any property to them. Constantine, Caesar in the western empire, and Licinius, Caesar in the east, also were signatories to the edict of toleration. It has been speculated that Galerius' reversal of his long- standing policy of Christian persecution has been attributable to one or both of these co-Caesars.

The Rise of Christianity

The Diocletianic persecution was ultimately unsuccessful. As one modern historian has put it, it was simply "too little and too late." Christians were never purged systematically in any part of the empire, and Christian evasion continually undermined the edicts' enforcement. Although the persecution resulted in death, torture, imprisonment, or dislocation for many Christians, the majority of the empire's Christians avoided punishment. Some bribed their way to freedom or fled. In the end, the persecution failed to check the rise of the church. By 324, Constantine was sole ruler of the empire, and Christianity had become his favored religion.

By 324, Constantine, the Christian convert, ruled the entire empire alone. Christianity became the greatest beneficiary of imperial largesse. The persecutors had been routed.

As the historian J. Liebeschuetz has written: "The final result of the Great Persecution provided a testimonial to the truth of Christianity, which it could have won in no other way." After Constantine, the Christianization of the Roman Empire would continue apace. Under Theodosius I (r. 378-395), Christianity became the state religion. By the 5th century, Christianity was the empire's predominant faith, and filled the same role paganism had at the end of the 3rd century. Because of the persecution, however, a number of Christian communities were riven between those who had complied with imperial authorities (*traditores*) and those who had refused. In Africa, the Donatists, who protested the election of the alleged traditor, Caecilian, to the bishopric of Carthage, continued to resist the authority of the central church until after 411. The Melitians in Egypt left the Egyptian Church similarly divided.

The Edict of Milan

In 313, Constantine and Licinius announced in the Edict of Milan "that it was proper that the Christians and all others should have liberty to follow that mode of religion which to each of them appeared best," thereby granting tolerance to all religions, including Christianity. The Edict of Milan went a step further than the earlier Edict of Toleration by Galerius in 311, and returned confiscated Church property. This edict made the empire officially neutral with regard to religious worship; it neither made the traditional religions illegal, nor made Christianity the state religion (as did the later Edict of Thessalonica in 380 CE). The Edict of Milan did, however, raise the stock of Christianity within the empire, and it reaffirmed the importance of religious worship to the welfare of the state.

6.7.4: Constantine

Constantine the Great was a Roman Emperor from 306 to 337 CE; he adopted Christianity and declared it the religion of the Roman Empire.

Learning Objective

- Evaluate Constantine's rise to power and relationship with Christianity

Key Points

- The age of Constantine marked a distinct epoch in the history of the Roman Empire, both for founding Byzantium in the east, as well as his adoption of

Christianity as a state religion.

- As emperor, Constantine enacted many administrative, financial, social, and military reforms to strengthen the empire.
- Constantine experienced a dramatic event in 312 at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, after which Constantine claimed the emperorship in the west and converted to Christianity.
- According to some sources, on the evening of October 27, with the armies preparing for battle, Constantine had a vision of a cross, which led him to fight under the protection of the Christian god.
- The accession of Constantine was a turning point for early Christianity; after his victory, Constantine took over the role of patron of the Christian faith.

Key Terms

- **Battle of the Milvian Bridge** – A battle that took place between the Roman Emperors, Constantine I and Maxentius, on October 28, 312, and is often seen as the beginning of Constantine's conversion to Christianity.
- **Edict of Milan** – The February 313 CE agreement to treat Christians benevolently within the Roman Empire, thereby ending years of persecution.
- **Chi-Rho** – One of the earliest forms of christogram, which is used by some Christians, and was used by the Roman emperor, Constantine I (r. 306-337), as part of a military standard.

Constantine the Great was a Roman Emperor from 306-337 CE. Constantine was the son of Flavius Valerius Constantius, a Roman army officer, and his consort, Helena. His father became Caesar, the deputy emperor in the west, in 293 CE. Constantine was sent east, where he rose through the ranks to become a military tribune under the emperors Diocletian and Galerius. In 305, Constantius was raised to the rank of Augustus, senior western emperor, and Constantine was recalled west to campaign under his father in Britannia (modern Great Britain). Acclaimed as emperor by the army at Eboracum (modern-day York) after his father's death in 306 CE, Constantine emerged victorious in a series of civil wars against the emperors Maxentius and Licinius, to become sole ruler of both west and east by 324 CE.

As emperor, Constantine enacted many administrative, financial, social, and military reforms to strengthen the empire. The government was restructured and civil and military authority separated. A new gold coin, the solidus, was introduced to combat inflation. It would become the standard for Byzantine and European currencies for more than a thousand years. As the first Roman emperor to claim conversion to Christianity, Constantine played an influential role in the proclamation of the Edict of Milan in 313, which decreed tolerance for Christianity in the empire. He called the First Council of Nicaea in 325, at which the Nicene Creed was professed by Christians. In military matters, the Roman army was reorganized to consist of mobile field units and garrison soldiers capable of countering internal threats and barbarian invasions. Constantine pursued successful campaigns against the tribes on the Roman frontiers—the Franks, the Alamanni, the Goths, and the Sarmatians—even resettling territories abandoned by his predecessors during the Crisis of the Third Century.

Constantine's reputation flourished during the lifetime of his children and for centuries after his reign. The medieval church upheld him as a paragon of virtue, while secular rulers invoked him as a prototype, a point of reference, and the symbol of imperial legitimacy and identity. One of his major political legacies, aside from moving the capital of the empire to Constantinople, was that, in leaving the empire to his sons, he replaced Diocletian's tetrarchy with the principle of dynastic succession.

The Battle of the Milvian Bridge

Eusebius of Caesarea, and other Christian sources, record that Constantine experienced a dramatic event in 312 at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, after which Constantine claimed the emperorship in the west, and converted to Christianity. The Battle of the Milvian Bridge took place between the Roman Emperors, Constantine I and Maxentius, on October 28, 312. It takes its name from the Milvian Bridge, an important route over the Tiber.

Constantine won the battle and started on the path that led him to end the tetrarchy and become the sole ruler of the Roman Empire. Maxentius drowned in the Tiber during the battle, and his body was later taken from the river and decapitated.

According to chroniclers, such as Eusebius of Caesarea and Lactantius, the battle marked the beginning of Constantine's conversion to Christianity. Eusebius of Caesarea recounts

that Constantine looked up to the sun before the battle and saw a cross of light above it, and with it the Greek words *Ἐν Τούτῳ Νίκα* ("in this sign, conquer!"), often rendered in a Latin version, "*in hoc signo vinces*." Constantine commanded his troops to adorn their shields with a Christian symbol (the Chi-Rho), and thereafter they were victorious. The Arch of Constantine, erected in celebration of the victory, certainly attributes Constantine's success to divine intervention; however, the monument does not display any overtly Christian symbolism, so there is no scholarly consensus on the events' relation to Constantine's conversion to Christianity.



Figure 149 Missorium depicting Constantine's son Constantius II, accompanied by a guardsman with the Chi Rho monogram depicted on his shield.

Following the battle, Constantine ignored the altars to the gods prepared on the Capitoline, and did not carry out the customary sacrifices to celebrate a general's victorious entry into Rome, instead heading directly to the imperial palace. Most influential people in the empire, however, especially high military officials, had not been converted to Christianity, and still participated in the traditional religions of Rome;

Constantine's rule exhibited at least a willingness to appease these factions. The Roman coins minted up to eight years

after the battle still bore the images of Roman gods. The monuments he first commissioned, such as the Arch of Constantine, contained no reference to Christianity.

Constantine and Christianity

While the Roman Emperor Constantine the Great reigned (306-337 CE), Christianity began to transition to the dominant religion of the Roman Empire. Historians remain uncertain about Constantine's reasons for favoring Christianity, and theologians and historians have argued about which form of Early Christianity he subscribed to. There is no consensus among scholars as to whether he adopted his mother Helena's Christianity in

his youth, or (as claimed by Eusebius of Caesarea) encouraged her to convert to the faith himself. Some scholars question the extent to which he should be considered a Christian emperor: "Constantine saw himself as an 'emperor of the Christian people.' If this made him a Christian is the subject of debate," although he allegedly received a baptism shortly before his death.

Constantine's decision to cease the persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire was a turning point for early Christianity, sometimes referred to as the Triumph of the Church, the Peace of the Church, or the Constantinian Shift. In 313, Constantine and Licinius issued the Edict of Milan, decriminalizing Christian worship. The emperor became a great patron of the Church and set a precedent for the position of the Christian emperor within the Church, and the notion of orthodoxy, Christendom, ecumenical councils, and the state church of the Roman Empire, declared by edict in 380. He is revered as a saint and isapostolos in the Eastern Orthodox Church and Oriental Orthodox Church for his example as a "Christian monarch."

6.7.5: The Shift East

Constantine built a new imperial residence in Byzantium and renamed the city Constantinople after himself; the city eventually became the capital of the empire for over one thousand years.

Learning Objective

- Explain why Constantine moved the capital of the empire to Constantinople, and the consequences that had for the empire as a whole

Key Points

- After defeating Maxentius and his rebellion, Constantine gradually consolidated his military superiority over his rivals in the crumbling Tetrarchy, in particular Licinius.
- Eventually, Constantine defeated Licinius, making him the sole emperor of the empire, thereby ending the tetrarchy.
- Licinius' defeat came to represent the defeat of a rival center of Pagan and Greek-speaking political activity in the east, and it was proposed that a new eastern capital should represent the integration of the east into the Roman Empire as a whole;

Constantine chose Byzantium.

- The city was thus founded in 324, dedicated on May 11, 330, and renamed Constantinople.
- The Byzantine Empire considered Constantine its founder, and the Holy Roman Empire reckoned him among the venerable figures of its tradition.

Key Terms

- **Byzantium** – An ancient Greek colony on the site that later became Constantinople, and eventually Istanbul.
- **Byzantine Empire** – Also referred to as the Eastern Roman Empire, was the continuation of the Roman Empire in the east during Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, when the empire's capital city was Constantinople.

The age of Constantine marked a distinct epoch in the history of the Roman Empire. He built a new imperial residence at Byzantium, and renamed the city Constantinople after himself (the laudatory epithet of "New Rome" came later, and was never an official title). It would later become the capital of the empire for over one thousand years; for this reason the later Eastern Empire would come to be known as the Byzantine Empire.

Background: War With Licinius

After defeating Maxentius, Constantine gradually consolidated his military superiority over his rivals in the crumbling tetrarchy. In 313, he met Licinius in Milan to secure their alliance by the marriage of Licinius and Constantine's half-sister, Constantia. During this meeting, the emperors agreed on the so-called Edict of Milan, officially granting full tolerance to Christianity and all religions in the Empire. In the year 320, Licinius allegedly reneged on the religious freedom promised by the Edict of Milan in 313, and began to oppress Christians anew, generally without bloodshed, but resorting to confiscations and sacking of Christian office-holders.

This dubious arrangement eventually became a challenge to Constantine in the west, climaxing in the great civil war of 324. Licinius, aided by Goth mercenaries, represented the past and the ancient Pagan faiths. Constantine and his Franks marched under the standard of the *labarum* Chi-Rho, and both sides saw the battle in religious terms.

Outnumbered, but fired by their zeal, Constantine's army emerged victorious in the Battle

of Adrianople. Licinius fled across the Bosphorus and appointed Martius Martinianus, the commander of his bodyguard, as Caesar, but Constantine next won the Battle of the Hellespont, and finally the Battle of Chrysopolis on September 18, 324. Licinius and Martinianus surrendered to Constantine at Nicomedia on the promise their lives would be spared: they were sent to live as private citizens in Thessalonica and Cappadocia, respectively, but in 325, Constantine accused Licinius of plotting against him and had them both arrested and hanged. Licinius's son (the son of Constantine's half-sister) was also killed. Thus, Constantine became the sole emperor of the Roman Empire.

Foundation of Constantinople

Licinius' defeat came to represent the defeat of a rival center of Pagan and Greek-speaking political activity in the east, as opposed to the Christian and Latin-speaking Rome, and it was proposed that a new eastern capital should represent the integration of the east into the Roman Empire as a whole, as a center of learning, prosperity, and cultural preservation for the whole of the eastern Roman Empire. Among the various locations proposed for this alternative capital, Constantine appears to have toyed earlier with Serdica (present-day Sofia), as he was reported saying that "Serdica is my Rome." Sirmium and Thessalonica were also considered. Eventually, however, Constantine decided to work on the Greek city of Byzantium, which offered the advantage of having already been extensively rebuilt on Roman patterns of urbanism, during the preceding century, by Septimius Severus and Caracalla, who had already acknowledged its strategic importance.

The city was thus founded in 324, dedicated on May 11, 330, and renamed *Constantinopolis* ("Constantine's City" or Constantinople in English). Special commemorative coins were issued in 330 to honor the event. The new city was protected by the relics of the True Cross, the Rod of Moses, and other holy relics,

though a cameo now at the Hermitage Museum also represented Constantine crowned by the tyche of the new city. The figures of old gods were either replaced or assimilated into a



Figure 150 Coin struck by Constantine I to commemorate the founding of Constantinople.

framework of Christian symbolism. Constantine built the new Church of the Holy Apostles on the site of a temple to Aphrodite. Generations later there was the story that a divine vision led Constantine to this spot, and an angel no one else could see led him on a circuit of the new walls. The capital would often be compared to the 'old' Rome as *Nova Roma Constantinopolitana*, the "New Rome of Constantinople." Constantinople was a superb base from which to guard the Danube River, and it was reasonably close to the eastern frontiers. Constantine also began the building of the great fortified walls, which were expanded and rebuilt in subsequent ages.

Legacy

Historian J.B. Bury asserts that "*the foundation of Constantinople [...] inaugurated a permanent division between the Eastern and Western, the Greek and the Latin, halves of the empire—a division to which events had already pointed—and affected decisively the whole subsequent history of Europe.*"

The Byzantine Empire considered Constantine its founder, and the Holy Roman Empire reckoned him among the venerable figures of its tradition. In the later Byzantine state, it had become a great honor for an emperor to be hailed as a "new Constantine." Ten emperors, including the last emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire, carried the name. Monumental Constantinian forms were used at the court of Charlemagne to suggest that he was Constantine's successor and equal. Constantine acquired a mythic role as a warrior against "heathens."

6.7.6: The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire

The Fall of the Western Roman Empire was the period of decline during which the empire disintegrated and split into numerous successor states.

Learning Objective

- Analyze, broadly, the causes of the fall of the Roman Empire

Key Points

- Throughout the 5th century, the empire's territories in Western Europe and northwestern Africa, including Italy, fell to various invading or indigenous peoples, in what is sometimes called the Migration Period.

- By the late 3rd century, the city of Rome no longer served as an effective capital for the emperor, and various cities were used as new administrative capitals. Successive emperors, starting with Constantine, privileged the eastern city of Byzantium, which he had entirely rebuilt after a siege.
- In 476, after being refused lands in Italy, Odoacer and his Germanic mercenaries took Ravenna, the Western Roman capital at the time, and deposed Western Emperor Romulus Augustus. The whole of Italy was quickly conquered, and Odoacer's rule became recognized in the Eastern Empire.
- Four broad schools of thought exist on the decline and fall of the Roman Empire: decay owing to general malaise, monocausal decay, catastrophic collapse, and transformation.

Key Terms

- **Migration Period** – Also known as the period of the Barbarian Invasions, it was a period of intensified human migration in Europe from about 400 to 800 CE, during the transition from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages.
- **Odoacer** – A soldier, who came to power in the Western Roman Empire in 476 CE. His reign is commonly seen as marking the end of the Western Roman Empire.

The Fall of the Western Roman Empire was the process of decline during which the empire failed to enforce its rule, and its vast territory was divided into several successor polities. The Roman Empire lost the strengths that had allowed it to exercise effective control; modern historians mention factors including the effectiveness and numbers of the army, the health and numbers of the Roman population, the strength of the economy, the competence of the emperor, the religious changes of the period, and the efficiency of the civil administration. Increasing pressure from barbarians outside Roman culture also contributed greatly to the collapse. The reasons for the collapse are major subjects of the historiography of the ancient world, and they inform much modern discourse on state failure.

By 476 CE, when Odoacer deposed Emperor Romulus, the Western Roman Empire wielded negligible military, political, or financial power and had no effective control over the scattered western domains that could still be described as Roman. Invading "barbarians"

had established their own polities on most of the area of the Western Empire. While its legitimacy lasted for centuries longer and its cultural influence remains today, the Western Empire never had the strength to rise again.

It is important to note, however, that the so-called fall of the Roman Empire specifically refers to the fall of the *Western* Roman Empire, since the Eastern Roman Empire, or what became known as the Byzantine Empire, whose capital was founded by Constantine, remained for another 1,000 years. Theodosius was the last emperor who ruled over the whole empire. After his death in 395, he gave the two halves of the empire to his two sons, Arcadius and Honorius; Arcadius became ruler in the east, with his capital in Constantinople, and Honorius became ruler in the west, with his capital in Milan, and later Ravenna.

Rome in the 5th Century CE

Throughout the 5th century, the empire's territories in Western Europe and northwestern Africa, including Italy, fell to various invading or indigenous peoples in what is sometimes called the Migration Period, also known as the Barbarian Invasions, from the Roman and South European perspective. The first migrations of peoples were made by Germanic tribes, such as the Goths, Vandals, Angles, Saxons, Lombards, Suebi, Frisii, Jutes and Franks; they were later pushed westwards by the Huns, Avars, Slavs, and Bulgars.

Although the eastern half still survived with borders essentially intact for several centuries (until the Muslim conquests), the Empire as a whole had initiated major cultural and political transformations since the Crisis of the Third Century, with the shift towards a more openly autocratic and ritualized form of government, the adoption of Christianity as the state religion, and a general rejection of the traditions and values of Classical Antiquity.

The reasons for the decline of the Empire are still debated today, and are likely multiple. Historians infer that the population appears to have diminished in many provinces (especially western Europe), judging from the diminishing size of fortifications built to protect the cities from barbarian incursions from the 3rd century on. Some historians even have suggested that parts of the periphery were no longer inhabited, because these fortifications were restricted to the center of the city only. By the late 3rd century, the city of Rome no longer served as an effective capital for the emperor, and various cities were

used as new administrative capitals. Successive emperors, starting with Constantine, privileged the eastern city of Byzantium, which he had entirely rebuilt after a siege. Later renamed Constantinople, and protected by formidable walls in the late 4th and early 5th centuries, it was to become the largest and most powerful city of Christian Europe in the Early Middle Ages. Since the Crisis of the Third Century, the empire was intermittently ruled by more than one emperor at once (usually two), presiding over different regions. The Latin-speaking west, under dreadful demographic crisis, and the wealthier Greek-speaking east, also began to diverge politically and culturally. Although this was a gradual process, still incomplete when Italy came under the rule of barbarian chieftains in the last quarter of the 5th century, it deepened further afterward, and had lasting consequences for the medieval history of Europe.

In 476, after being refused lands in Italy, Orestes' Germanic mercenaries, under the leadership of the chieftain Odoacer, captured and executed Orestes and took Ravenna, the Western Roman capital at the time, deposing Western Emperor Romulus Augustus. The whole of Italy was quickly conquered, and Odoacer's rule became recognized in the Eastern Empire. Meanwhile, much of the rest of the Western provinces were conquered by waves of Germanic invasions, most of them being disconnected politically from the east altogether, and continuing a slow decline. Although Roman political authority in the west was lost, Roman culture would last in most parts of the former western provinces into the 6th century and beyond.



Figure 151 Charlotte Mary Yonge's 1880 artist rendition of Romulus Augustus resigning the crown to Odoacer.

Theories on the Decline and Fall

The various theories and explanations for the fall of the Roman Empire in the west may be very broadly classified into four schools of thought (although the classification is not without overlap):

- Decay owing to general malaise
- Monocausal decay
- Catastrophic collapse
- Transformation

The tradition positing general malaise goes back to the historian, Edward Gibbon, who argued that the edifice of the Roman Empire had been built on unsound foundations from the beginning. According to Gibbon, the fall was—in the final analysis—inevitable. On the other hand, Gibbon had assigned a major portion of the responsibility for the decay to the influence of Christianity, and is often, though perhaps unjustly, seen as the founding father of the school of monocausal explanation. On the other hand, the school of catastrophic collapse holds that the fall of the empire had not been a pre-determined event and need not be taken for granted. Rather, it was due to the combined effect of a number of adverse processes, many of them set in motion by the Migration Period, which together applied too



Figure 152 The Ostrogothic Kingdom, which rose from the ruins of the Western Roman Empire.

much stress to the empire's basically sound structure. Finally, the transformation school challenges the whole notion of the 'fall' of the empire, asking instead to distinguish between the fall into disuse of a particular political dispensation, anyway unworkable towards its end; and the fate of the Roman civilization that under-girded the empire. According to this school,

drawing its basic premise from the Pirenne thesis, the Roman world underwent a gradual (though often violent) series of transformations, morphing into the medieval world. The historians belonging to this school often prefer to speak of Late Antiquity, instead of the Fall of the Roman Empire.

Attributions

- Crises of the Roman Empire
 - "History of the Roman Empire."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Roman_Empire. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- "Crisis of the Third Century."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crisis_of_the_Third_Century. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "800px-Map_of_Ancient_Rome_271_AD.svg.png."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_Ancient_Rome_271_AD.svg. Wikimedia GNU FDL 1.2.
- Diocletian and the Tetrarchy
 - "Diocletian's Palace." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diocletian%27s_Palace. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Tetrarchy."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tetrarchy%23mediaviewer/File:Tetrarchy_map3.jpg. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Praetorian Prefect." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Praetorian_prefect. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Diocletian." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diocletian%23Tetrarchy>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Crisis of the Third Century."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crisis_of_the_Third_Century. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "tetrarchy." <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/tetrarchy>. Wiktionary CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Tetrarchy Map."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tetrarchy_map3.jpg. Wikimedia GNU FDL 1.2.
 - "Diocletian's Palace (original appearance)."
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Diocletian%27s_Palace_\(original_appearance\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Diocletian%27s_Palace_(original_appearance).jpg). Wikimedia Public domain.
- The Rise of Christianity
 - "Diocletianic Persecution."
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diocletianic_Persecution. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.

- "Edict of Milan." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edict_of_milan. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
- "Constantine the Great and Christianity." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantine_the_Great_and_Christianity. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
- Constantine
 - "Constantine the Great." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantine_the_Great. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Constantine the Great and Christianity." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantine_the_Great_and_Christianity. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Battle of the Milvian Bridge." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_the_Milvian_Bridge. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "1280px-Missorium_Kerch.jpg." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_the_Milvian_Bridge#/media/File:Missorium_Kerch.jp Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- The Shift East
 - "Byzantine Empire." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine_Empire#History. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Constantine the Great." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantine_the_Great. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Constantinopolis_coin.jpg." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantine_the_Great#/media/File:Constantinopolis_coin.jpg. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
- The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire
 - "Ostrogothic Kingdom." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ostrogothic_Kingdom. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0.
 - "Migration Period." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Migration_period. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
 - "Fall of the Western Roman Emi." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fall_of_the_Western_Roman_Empire. Wikipedia

CC BY-SA.

- "Decline of the Roman Empire."
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decline_of_the_Roman_Empire%23Theories_of_a_fall.2C_declin Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
- "Odoacer." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Odoacer>. Wikipedia CC BY-SA.
- "Ostrogothic Kingdom."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ostrogothic_Kingdom.png.
Wikimedia Public domain.
- "Young Folks' History of Rome."
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Young_Folks%27_History_of_Rome_illus420.png. Wikimedia Public domain.